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The Black English Vernacular in the Writing of Young Adults From Dayton, Ohio.

Nancy Goppert Terrebonne
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

THE BLACK ENGLISH VERNACULAR IN THE WRITING OF YOUNG ADULTS FROM DAYTON, OHIO

A Dissertation

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May, 1975

To

James Eason, who taught me far more than I taught him

and

James Gleason, who prevented me from using it

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very much in debt to the many young people who have tried to teach me about the Black Experience as well as the Black Vernacular. Primary among these friends are Juanita Mitchell, Andrew Taylor, James Eason, Hubert Christman, Brenda Cunningham, and Stan Guthrie. I am also in debt to my friend Paula Randall, who unselfishly let me borrow so many student papers and who has given her unqualified support in my fight against sexism and discrimination. To my father and my brother I am indebted for financial assistance. I could never have afforded to quit work to write the dissertation without their support. Other close friends who have helped to sustain me during a time of great stress are Annie Wade, Carol Parr, Beth Wilzbach, and Dr. Thomas Wetmore. My daughter, Sally, and my son, Jeff, have also supported me. No one, however, has been as important to my very existence as my husband. He has given direction to my research. He has provided invaluable insights into the problems as they arose from the research. He has given me emotional and moral support at his own great personal and professional expense. And he still endures and believes.

FOREWORD

This dissertation is a product of four years of working and thinking, rethinking and reworking. It has been a sustained, unrelenting exercise in sensitivity training and consciousness raising. I cannot say, of course, that it has taught me what it feels like to be a Black American, but the Black Experience has touched me and I have been touched profoundly by it.

Many of the people whose writing I describe, quote, and attempt to analyze in these pages are my personal friends. I respect them all and, as their "teacher," have learned much from them. In writing about them I am in no way ridiculing their written work, but am attempting to understand it and to impart that understanding to others.

Originally when I began work on this dissertation I saw myself devising a remedial course in Freshman English--a course for Black students, which, I believed, would be better than other remedial courses because it would be founded upon the reality of those students' writings. I was well intentioned, believing, as many bidialectalists do, that I should give my Black students the "opportunity" to be like me. I was under the assumption that when a young Black person attends a predominantly

white institution, her or his primary goal is to become like those who predominate at that institution--the white middle class. There are some of course who do have this goal and who do not question whether it is worth having. There are others, I have come to realize, who attend in order to be "inoculated" against the "disease."

My hope now is that if there are individuals who would use my research and its results to "teach" Black students Middle Class English, they will be mindful of these quite distinct goals, that they will be mindful too of the very great odds which young adults are up against in learning a new dialect, and that in any case they will be realistic about how much <u>can</u> be accomplished and considerate of whether it <u>should</u> be accomplished. Students should not be misled about either the possibilities of their learning a prestige dialect at age 18-20 or the tremendous amount of work, concentration, and especially motivation that it will take.

Carrying on this research, working with speakers of the Black Vernacular, and experiencing discrimination myself have all led me to a better understanding of the oppressive forces in our Society and of its insistence that we all conform to the "norm." As a result of this increasing awareness, and partly as an expression of resistance against meaningless pressures to conform,

I have made certain stylistic decisions regarding the writing of this dissertation. One decision involves my avoidance of the educational jargon which characterizes so many research reports; for example, the couching of questions to be investigated in the jargon of "null hypotheses" rather than stating the questions and underlying assumptions directly.

I have also quite deliberately used the first person singular pronoun throughout the dissertation. This decision is a direct result of attending a lecture given by Jonathan Kozol on April 4, 1974. Kozol spoke in this lecture of the fear which our public schools have of the first person singular pronoun. He labeled this bias against its use as "a well-implanted vaccine against ethical infection." "To speak out bluntly in the first person present indicative," he said, is to say "I am alive right now; I see the world around me; I perceive its nature; I have the power to change it." As a consequence then of listening to Kozol speak and also of listening to and reading Dwight Bolinger's talk (December 1972) before the Linguistic Society of America, entitled "Truth is a Linguistic Question," I have sought to avoid in writing my dissertation the impersonality which usually characterizes a report on a piece of research: I have studiously avoided the passive voice

as well as the impersonal third singular reference to myself as the one who did the research, the thinking, and the writing.

A third stylistic decision which I have made involves my intentional avoidance of the third personal singular masculine pronouns (he, him, his) to refer to generic nouns. Whenever possible, I have used plural constructions (the individuals rather than an individual, and thus in reference they instead of he); sometimes I used coordinate pronouns (he or she, him or her, as well as her or his); occasionally also I used plural pronouns to refer to singular generic nouns (an individual . . . they) --a practice which is quite common in many people's speech including my own. In this use I am thus acknowledging the drift of the language. (The current dispute over the sexist use of masculine pronouns to refer to generic nouns would be non-existent if pedants and English teachers would simply accept this drift.)

In short, my decisions regarding style are deliberate choices and a conscious result of expressing who I am and how I view and react to my surroundings. They are not just matters of style; they are matters of conscience. In making these decisions, I am saying that I refuse to perpetuate practices which reflect the second-class status of women and that I am totally responsible for this dissertation; I am not afraid to acknowledge that I did the work.

Thus my stylistic decisions are integrally connected with the very subject of my dissertation, for they are attempts to recognize and struggle against the oppressive conformist forces in our Society.

A young man named Henry Postway has expressed the urgency of this struggle far more eloquently than I know how:

> An experience with prejudice
> is an obstacle
> which stands in the way,
> a hindrance.
> It has affected me
> and others
> with its echo--
> its reflection in the mirror.
> It says Black, Black, Black.
> . . .
> Yes, prejudice looks me in the face
> Every day.
> But I won't accentuate
> that It's acceptable
> and It's here to stay.
> Because a new day is coming
> and new people
> with new ideals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of the Black English Vernacular (BEV). Specifically, it seeks to answer several questions: 1) Which BEV features manifest themselves in the writing of young adults? 2) How often do each of these features occur? 3) What constraints, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, promote the occurrence of the BEV features? 4) What is the relative significance of the various features? 5) Is there an implicational relationship between the features? 6) Why are some individuals more likely to use Vernacular features in their writing than others? 7) What are the educational implications of these several factors?

The data upon which this dissertation is based includes over 350 compositions written in the college classroom by 42 Black students in a predominantly White university. The informants, who are predominantly from working class and lower class families, are natives of Dayton, Ohio. They include 22 females and 20 males, ranging in age from 17 to 20.

I have measured the correlation between certain extra-linguistic variables (the social class of the informants, the mobility of their families, their racial isolation, their sex, and their performance on the college

entrance ACT test) and the use of over 20 linguistic variables. I have counted the total potential occurrences of each of these linguistic variables and then determined each feature's percentage of occurrence. I have analyzed several of the major variables by means of the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis computer program in order to measure statistically the effect of various constraints on each of these variables.

There was a wide divergence in linguistic performance among the informants. This divergence did not appear to correlate with any of the socioeconomic variables, although there was some evidence that sex was a factor in the use of certain BEV features. ACT test scores showed no significant correlation with the other variables; however, those informants who had attended integrated high schools generally had higher ACT scores than those who had not, and the percentage of BEV features in their writing was also generally lower than for those who had attended only segregated schools. A more important factor in determining ability to write in Standard English as opposed to BEV appears to be the kind and degree of motivation each individual has, specifically the desire to assimilate both culturally and economically to the Middle Class.

Regarding the linguistic variables themselves,

those features with the highest percentage of occurrence included possessive 's absence, third singular s absence, a before vowels, adverbial s absence, and double negatives. My statistical investigation of linguistic constraints on eight of the major variables produced results which for some features (e.g. d absence) largely paralleled the results of previous studies. For other features, however, (particularly the presence of s at the end of third plural verbs) my findings are at variance with previous studies.

I found an apparent implicational relationship (with 89% scalability) among seven key features, such that copula deletion implied the use of plural is, which implied third plural verb s presence, which implied noun plural s absence, which implied third singular s absence, which implied the use of a before vowels, which implied d absence. The implications are that a person who deletes the copula in writing is likely to use all the major BEV features I have studied. Therefore, the task of teaching such an individual at the age of 17 to 20 to write in Standard English is formidable if not impossible.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation rests upon one very basic assumption--that features that occur in speech also occur in writing. In making this assumption, I am not saying that writing and speech are identical. I recognize that there are many features which characterize oral language which are not reflected in writing or at least not consistently reflected in writing; for example, pronunciation features, such as the suprasegmentals (stress, pitch, and juncture) and syntactic patterns, such as the use of conversational fillers (e.g. you know, like, just), repetitions, self-corrections, and false starts.

I am aware also that people differ in the extent to which their writing mirrors their speech and in the degree of formality which characterizes their writing. For some, the distinction between oral and written registers is minimal; their writing closely parallels informal speech, particularly when the papers they write are personal experience papers. For others, the difference between speech and writing is very great; there is more objectivity, more complexity in their writing, which is even more formal than their most careful spoken style.

There are, however, many basic similarities between all people's speech and their writing, for writing and

speech are both linguistic activities involving the expression of thoughts and ideas, and attempts at writing are from the very beginning attempts to transfer speech to paper.

The linguistic features which I have chosen to study are thus basic features of the language. Most involve ways of expressing the most central of syntactic structures--the verb phrase. Furthermore, these features have previously been studied and found to be common in the speech of Black English Vernacular speakers in various communities in the United States. I assume therefore that they are likely to be common also in the speech of BEV speakers in Dayton, Ohio.

When I discover, then, that one of these previously studied features occurs commonly in the writing of a number of the Dayton informants, I assume that that feature is a regular part of the Dayton Black English Vernacular. If a feature occurs, but not commonly in the Dayton informants' writing, the situation is not so clear cut. Either the feature is a regular part of the spoken Vernacular but is for some reason (perhaps due to heavy stigma) quite limited in writing. Or the feature is inherently variable in the Vernacular but one variant is much more common than the other. Or the feature is not part of the Vernacular but a characteristic of another more prestigious dialect (Standard English) of which the informants

have some, though an imperfect, awareness; that is, the variability may result from dialect mixture or code switching.

In other words, I do not assume that a feature uncommon or rare in the writing of the Dayton informants is common in their speech, but I also do not necessarily assume the reverse--that the fact that a feature does not commonly occur proves that it is not common in the speech of those informants. I simply cannot resolve the question of whether low percentages of occurrence of a feature reflect code switching or inherent variability. Therefore, statements which I make about infrequently occurring features are necessarily tentative. My main purpose in this dissertation, however, is not to concentrate on low percentages of occurrence but to isolate the major, commonly occurring Vernacular features and to determine the relationships, if any, between them. For this reason the question of whether certain infrequently occurring features are examples of dialect mixture or inherent variability is not of overriding significance.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The subject of this dissertation is the Black English Vernacular (BEV). Specifically, this dissertation concentrates upon how and to what extent Black Vernacular features are manifested in the writing of young adults. To date, studies of this aspect of the Vernacular have been very few and very limited in scope. (See, for example, Wolfram and Whiteman 1971:34.) Such studies are of great importance, however, if we are to determine what specific features are in the repertory of the speaker/writer (Troike 1969:99) and if we are to overcome the "reciprocal ignorance" that exists between speakers of BEV and teachers of those speakers (Labov 1972a:3-4).

Previous research on BEV:

The lack of previous research in this area is of course primarily a result of the fact that linguistic description and analysis of spoken varieties of BEV is itself quite recent, developing along with the growing sense of Black pride and Black power in the 1960's and proliferating within only the past decade. The earlier failure of linguists to pay serious or prolonged attention to the Black Vernacular in the first half of the twentieth century, when descriptive studies were being made of many other languages and

dialects, was probably due, as Wolfram (1971b:105) suggests, to several factors: One was the generally widespread but not always openly articulated attitude "that non-standard speech is less worthy of interest . . . than varieties of speech with high prestige and social acceptability." (Stewart 1965:13) On the other hand, it may also have been true that there was a genuine concern and respect, at least among some linguists, for the feelings of Blacks, "particularly educated ones," who, prior to the Black pride movement of the 60's, were naturally sensitive to "any public focus on distinctly Negro behavior, particularly if it happen[ed] to be that of lower class Negroes." (Stewart 1965:13)

Another factor which Wolfram (1971b:105) has suggested as contributing to the earlier neglect of the study of the Black Vernacular was the widely accepted belief that the speech of Blacks does not differ significantly from the speech of uneducated Southern Whites. Kurath's conclusion (1949:6) was that "the speech of the educated Negroes . . . differs little from that of the illiterate white." Such a conclusion, coming from such an assumed authority, no doubt inhibited the investigation of the Black Vernacular.

It was due primarily to the efforts of scholars such as William Stewart and Beryl Bailey that the study of the Black Vernacular became popular in the 60's.

Their early efforts were directed primarily at gaining recognition of the relationship between American Black English and the Caribbean Creoles. (See, for example, Bailey's "Toward a New Perspective in English Dialectology" and Stewart's "Sociolinguistic Factors in the History of American Negro Dialects," both reprinted in Wolfram and Clarke (1971:41-50,74-89).)

Quickly, however, the educational implications became apparent, and therefore discussions and applications of Stewart's and Bailey's and others' findings began to proliferate. There has resulted a mounting collection of articles and papers on the subject of the Black Vernacular by many educators as well as linguists. Many of these shorter works (e.g. Stewart's "Urban Negro Speech: Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting English Teaching" and Stephen and Joan Baratz' "Negro Ghetto Children and Urban Education: A Cultural Solution") appeared originally, or were reprinted, in The Florida FL Reporter. Other important articles (e.g. Labov's "Some Sources of Reading Problems for Negro Speakers of Non-Standard English" and Ralph Fasold and Walt Wolfram's "Some Linguistic Features of Negro Dialect") have appeared initially or been reprinted in several volumes published by the Center for Applied Linguistics: Teaching Black Children to Read (1969), Teaching Standard English in the Inner City (1970), and

Black-White Speech Relationships (1971).

An initial aim of those writing about the Black Vernacular--in addition to simply identifying the major characteristics of the dialect--was to promote both tolerance and understanding. This desire has been reflected in the ever-changing labels used to refer to the Vernacular, from Negro dialect, Negro speech, and Negro Nonstandard English to Black English, Black American English, Afro-American English (and even Black Standard and Black Nonstandard) to the most recent label--the Black English Vernacular.

This desire has also been reflected in the heated debates which linguists like Labov have carried on with proponents of the "deficit" or "verbal deprivation" theory of language learning. In his classic article, "The Logic of Nonstandard English," Labov asserts that "the most useful service which linguists can perform today is to clear away the illusion of 'verbal deprivation' and provide a more adequate notion of the relations between standard and nonstandard dialects." (1970a:2)

The primary purpose of all the works to come out of the early period of research into the nature of the Black Vernacular has been to enlighten others--and particularly teachers of young Black children--about

the features which characterize the Black English Vernacular. One after another of those who wrote about the subject have emphasized the importance of viewing the Black Vernacular not as a collection of deviations from Standard English but as features native to the Vernacular itself. Thus Fasold and Wolfram, for example, have written that the Black Vernacular "is a fully formed linguistic system in its own right, with its own grammar and pronunciation rules; it cannot simply be dismissed as an unworthy approximation of standard English." (1970:42) And Joan Baratz has emphasized that young Black children "speak a well-ordered, highly structured, highly developed language system, which in many aspects is different from standard English." (1969:94)

A related aim of most of these works has been to provide methods for teaching Black speakers a prestige dialect--what is most frequently called Standard English. Underlying this aim of course is a recognition of the fact that the Black Vernacular (or whatever name it goes by) is not a prestige variety of English. Such articles as Stewart's "Foreign Language Teaching Methods in Quasi Foreign Language Situations" and Feigenbaum's "The Use of Nonstandard English in Teaching Standard: Contrast and Comparison"--both included among related articles in the volume Teaching Standard English in

the Inner City (1970) are examples of this effort.

Unfortunately there have resulted a number of articles and projects which reflect an inadequate or at best only partial knowledge of what characterizes the Black Vernacular and even quite questionable concepts of what constitutes Standard English. For example, there is Carol Reed's approach to teaching "written Standard English" to Black speakers, which includes a list of Black English features alongside supposedly corresponding Standard English features. Among the "corresponding" features on her list are the following:

from TESOL Qrtrly 1973:7,289-307)

Black English	Standard English
like	as if
telling everybody Charles	telling everybody that Charles
telling a story	fibbing
Valentine Card	Valentine's Card

The old question arises, of course, "Whose Standard English?"

Another example of such unfortunate projects is Daisy Crystal's program "designed to provide remediation" of the "problems" of Black high school graduates when they enter college. (1972:43) In devising a "rewrite" test, which she calls the "Adult Language Inventory," Crystal explains that some sentences are "incorrect in either dialect (i.e. SE or BEV)" (1972:44). She writes "'He doesn't do nothing' . . . is ungrammatical

in Standard English because of multiple negation and ungrammatical in Nonstandard English because of the third person doesn't."[1] (1972:44)

Not surprisingly, as a result of all the concentration on "remediation" and assimilation of the speech of Black Americans to the speech of White middle class Americans, a backlash against the teaching of Standard English to speakers of the Black Vernacular has arisen. Most vocal in this movement is James Sledd, who attacks the "bidialectalists" or "biloquialists" for their "open-eyed hypocrisy" (1969:1308) in initiating Blacks into "the linguistic prejudices of the middle class." (1969:1307) Furthermore, Sledd charges that the bidialectalists have not succeeded nor can they succeed in their professed aim of producing bidialectals. He accuses them instead of turning "black people into uneasy imitations of the whites." (1969:1314)

Sledd has not denied, however, the importance of linguistic inquiry into the nature of the Vernacular nor of accurate descriptions of its structure and use. He merely argues about who should be taught. In fact he advocates that "every attempt should be made to teach the [predominantly white middle class] majority to understand the life and language of the oppressed." (1969:1329)

Many serious and scholarly descriptions of various

aspects of the Vernacular have been and are being made, including some I have already mentioned. However, the major works to result so far from all the investigation of the Vernacular include Wolfram's study of various phonological and grammatical features in Detroit (1969), Fasold's analysis of "tense marking" among Black speakers in Washington, D. C. (1972), and of course a number of studies by William Labov. (See, for example, his Inner City volume, chapters 3 and 4 (1972a).) By far the most comprehensive work to appear on the subject is A Study of the Nonstandard English of Negro and Puerto Rican Speakers in New York City, by Labov, Cohen, Robins, and Lewis (1968). In this work, Labov et al not only discuss such phonological and grammatical features as /-t,d/ deletion, the absence of the copula, and negative concord, but also analyze the structure of the Vernacular narrative and a number of significant speech events, including sounding, signifying, and playing the dozens.

In these major works Labov, Wolfram, and Fasold have turned their attention from merely identifying the major patterns of the Vernacular and advocating ways of teaching Standard English to speakers with those patterns, to analyzing statistically the linguistic and extra-linguistic constraints which operate on the various features to produce the variation in output which exists among those who speak the dialect.

The most important contribution which the study of the Vernacular has made to linguistic theory--and consequently to subsequent linguistic research--is Labov's concept of "inherent variability." While working, as he and his associates did, with young Black peer groups in Harlem, Labov found no evidence of a pure "basilect" Vernacular constituted of a number of categorical rules plus some "free variation." Instead, what he discovered was that even such far-reaching rules as "consonant cluster simplification" are not categorical but variable rules--rules which consist of various constraints which operate to differing degrees by favoring or restraining the occurrence of a particular variant. In making this important discovery, Labov has disposed of the old "catch-all/explain-nothing" concept of "free variation" and in its place has offered a concept of variation which applies to all human languages everywhere: variation is not free or random but is patterned and systematic.

Labov's methods of measuring variability have lately been refined by Henrietta Cedergren and David Sankoff (1974), who have devised a variable rule analysis computer program which assigns probabilities to the various constraints on a variable rule. Thus the program can represent statistically the relative weights of various constraints on a single rule.

Yet another important theory which has been developed lately is implicational theory. (See, for example, DeCamp (1971), Bickerton (1973), and C.-J. Bailey (1973).) Preliminary studies of these and other scholars "reveal," as Fasold explains, "that socially significant linguistic features occur in an implicational series such that the presence of some feature A in the speech of a certain individual means that the speaker will also be found to use features B, C, and D." (1970:551) The possible significance of this theory is also very great, for if its premises prove true, it provides a means of "formulating polylectal and eventually panlectal grammars of languages." (C.-J. Bailey 1973:172)

Scope of the dissertation: aims and assumptions:

It is at this point in linguistic research that I write this dissertation, which results from most of the same motivations that characterize earlier research in the field: both identifying the major features of a particular variety of the Vernacular and analyzing the constraints--both linguistic and extra-linguistic--upon those features, and more generally promoting understanding of the Vernacular as well as enlightening those who teach Black Vernacular speakers, by helping to fill the gap in knowledge which exists between teachers in our school systems and speakers of BEV. (Labov 1972a:3-4)

Specifically, I am concentrating here on how that

Vernacular is manifested in the writing of college-age adults from Dayton, Ohio. Some of these young people can be described as "peripheral members . . . who have begun to emerge from their total immersion in the vernacular culture" (Labov 1972a:280); others are no doubt "lames," who though growing up in the Black community, were either "isolated" individuals who were never "members of any vernacular peer group" or individuals who have "split away from the vernacular culture in their adolescent years." (Labov 1972a:258) It is the writing of these young people that I am concerned with here because as college students, they are judged, graded, passed, and "ultimately" graduated primarily on the strength of their ability to write in a prestige dialect--in Standard English.

I am also making certain basic assumptions in doing this research: 1) I am assuming that the Black Vernacular is, as William Labov and others have written, a "relatively uniform dialect spoken by the majority of black youth in most parts of the United States, especially in the inner city areas"[2] (Labov 1972a:xiii). 2) I am assuming therefore that the dialect native to young Blacks growing up in the inner city of Dayton (known as West Dayton) is characterized by the same basic linguistic features and the same "inherent variability" as have been found to exist among speakers of

the Black Vernacular in other northern cities in the United States; e.g. New York, Detroit, and Washington, D. C. 3) I am assuming that there is variation in the extent to which these Dayton informants reflect Vernacular speech, depending upon their closeness to the Vernacular culture. 4) I am assuming that writing being basically a linguistic activity is a reflection of an individual's speech, although the extent to which their writing reflects that speech again varies from individual to individual. 5) I am assuming also that there is some connection between an individual's linguistic performance and various extra-linguistic factors (e.g. social status, sex, age, intelligence, feelings of insecurity, alienation, etc.)

The basic questions which I explore in this dissertation include the following: 1) Which Black Vernacular features appear in the writing of the Dayton informants? 2) What is the percentage of occurrence of each Vernacular feature for each individual; that is, what is "the proportion of cases in which the form did occur . . . compared to the total number of cases in which it might have occurred"? (Labov 1972a:94) 3) What is the mean percentage of occurrence of each feature for the group as a whole? 4) What are the conditions under which these features occur? This has to do primarily with the linguistic

constraints on the BEV variant, but also I assume it has to do with certain extra-linguistic variables, such as those suggested above. 5) Which are the major Vernacular features to show up in writing, and what is the relative significance of each of these features to one another? 6) Why do certain individuals have a higher percentage of a particular BEV feature than others, and why do certain individuals have a higher total of percentages on all BEV features than others? Can I thereby determine which individuals are closest to the Vernacular in their writing and why? 7) Is there evidence of implicational scaling of features among the informants, and if so, what is the significance of that scaling?

Selection of informants/ratings of informants:

The 42 individuals (20 males and 22 females) who wrote the compositions which are the data upon which this study is based all conform to the following basic criteria: 1) At the time they wrote the compositions, they were Black college students, all of approximately the same age (range 17 to 20) and all attending a predominantly White institution. 2) They were natives of Dayton or at least had lived there since the time they began elementary school. 3) They had spent their formative years in the area known as West Dayton.

All the 42 individuals were young people whose

families are quite representative of the socioeconomic make-up of the West Dayton community as a whole. Most come from working class or lower class backgrounds (several from welfare families); only a few are middle class. By means of the Williams' Dayton City Directory and Suburban Directory (for the years from 1960 to 1972) I have traced the history of each of these individual's place of residence and of their parents' occupations throughout the informants' school years. On the basis of information available from this source and upon statistical information available from the U. S. Census in 1960 and 1970, I assign to each informant several numerical ratings:[3] 1) a socioeconomic status index (SES) for the year 1960 (the approximate year in which the individuals began their schooling); 2) an SES index for the year 1972, when the data was written; 3) a mobility index based on three mobility factors--occupational, economic, and educational mobility--arrived at by considering the change or lack of change of occupational level of the informant's family from 1960 to 1972 plus a comparison of census data on the individual's residential tract in 1960 and in 1972; 4) a racial isolation index based upon information available from the census concerning the percentage of Blacks in individual census tracts in 1960 and 1970, and information concerning where and how many years the informant

attended high school--specifically whether at an all-black or an integrated school. Two other variables which I examine and attempt to correlate with the linguistic data are scores on a standardized college entrance test known as the ACT[4] and the sex of the informant. Furthermore, where information is available, I also examine individual feelings of insecurity and alienation--both from the Vernacular culture and from the White middle class. (See Chapter IV, pp. 238 ff.)

Dayton, Ohio, as an area for sociolinguistic research:

The city of Dayton itself has not previously been a subject of any extensive sociolinguistic research. It is a city in many ways similar to, though considerably smaller (Dayton 1970 census = 243,601) than, Detroit, and like Detroit and many other urban industrial centers, Dayton has experienced in recent years a decline in total population (down approximately 7 percent since the 1960 census) and a simultaneous rise in its Black population.

Today Dayton is over 30 percent Black, and most of its Black families live in the area called West Dayton, which includes the Model Cities area, also known as Inner West Dayton--an area described by one Dayton newspaper writer as "overwhelmingly black and, by any standard, poverty stricken" (Goltz 1972:21). In 1950 the Black

population of West Dayton was 23,800; by 1960 it had more than doubled to 54,100. In 1970 the figure had risen again to 60,749. The area is now 91.6 percent Black. As one writer explains, "The trickle of black families which moved in during the late 1950's soon became an avalanche" (Smith 1972:1-B).

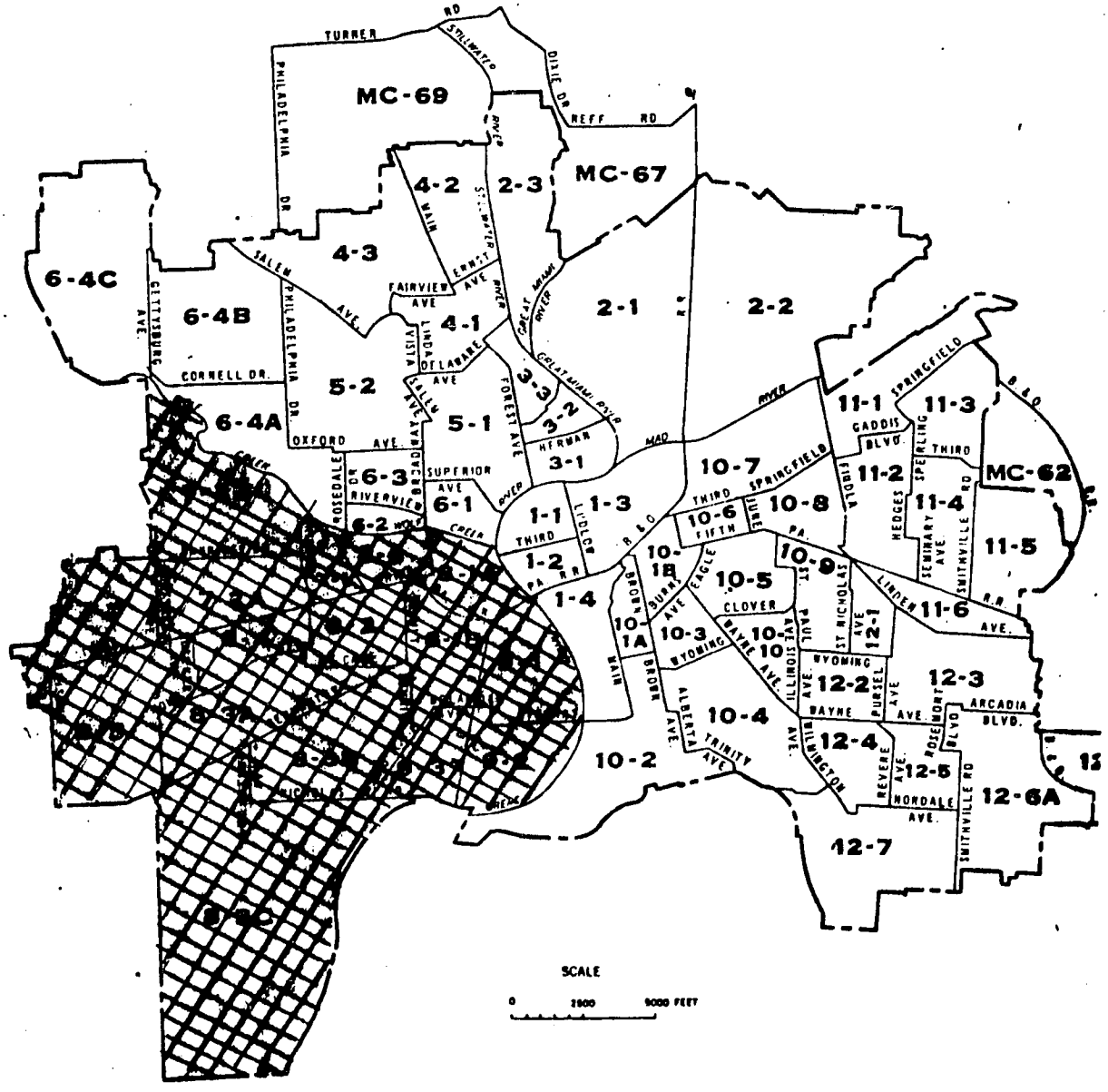
The West Dayton area is literally cut off from the rest of the city. It is bounded on the east by the Great Miami River and on the north by Wolf Creek; on the west and south by the city limits. The 1960 census divided West Dayton into 16 census tracts. (See shaded area, Map I.) These tracts have been re-numbered and slightly redivided and a small area annexed to the west for the 1970 census. (See Map II.) It is information available on these census tracts which I have used to determine two elements of each of the Dayton informants' general mobility indexes. (See below, pp. 23-29.)

Determination of extra-linguistic factors:

Each individual's SES index is based on the occupational rank of the head of the informant's household. For the 1960 index there were only four occupational ranks: 1 = head of household unemployed; 2 = head of household employed in an unskilled position (e.g. janitor, driver, yardman); 3 = head of household in a semi-skilled

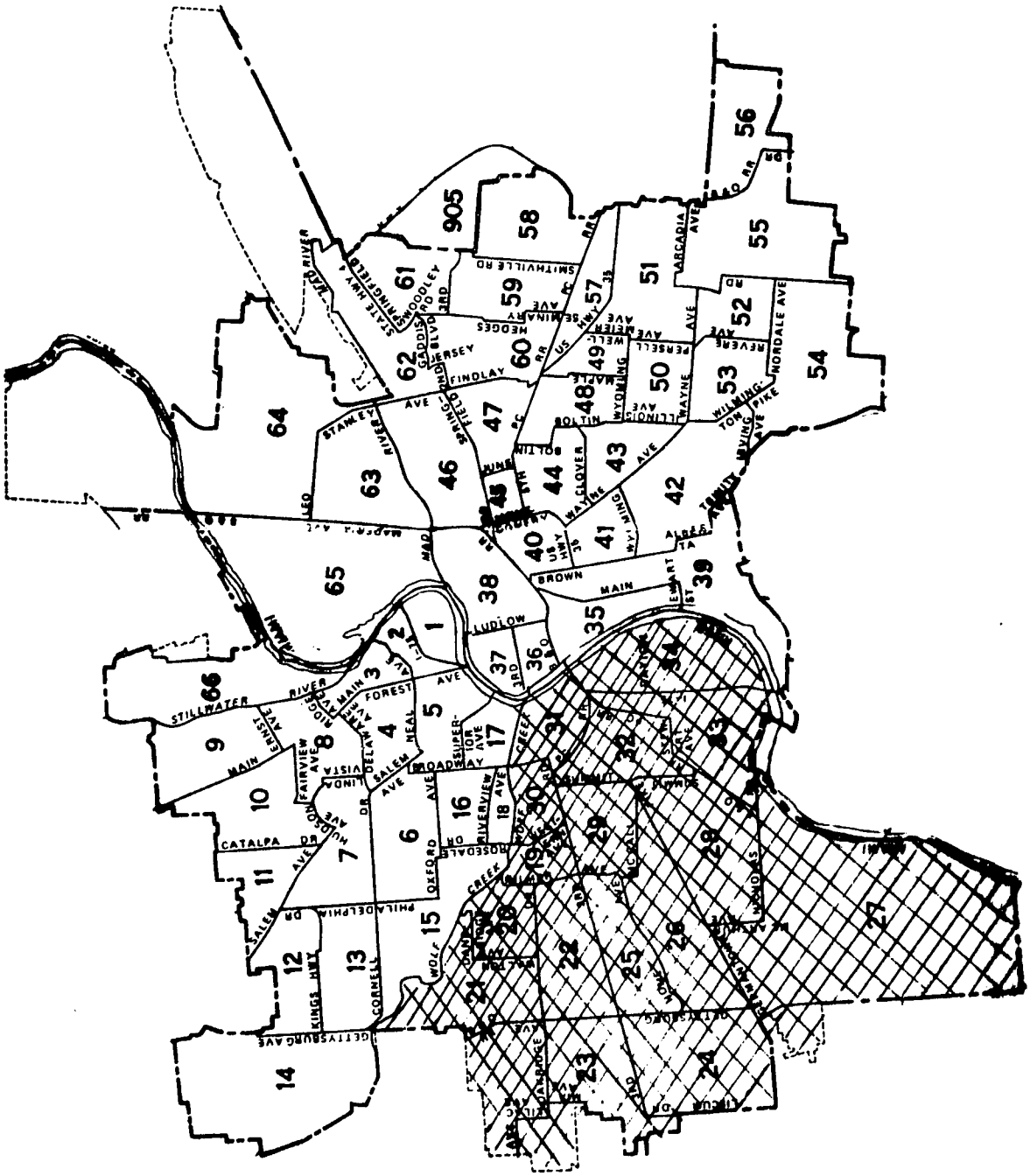
MAP I

Census Tracts in Dayton, Ohio, and Adjacent Area
(1960)



MAP II

Census Tracts in Dayton, Ohio
(1970)



position (e.g. machine operator, factory worker, assembler); and 4 = head of household skilled laborer or foreman. Accordingly, in 1960 there were eight informants with a rank of 1; sixteen with a rank of 2; eleven with a rank of 3; and seven ranked 4. By 1972, when the linguistic data was written, some differences in the numbers of individuals at each rank had occurred, and the occupational ranks had increased in number to a possible six: a new rank of 5 included three individuals whose fathers were now small businessmen, and rank 6 consisted of one informant whose parents had both become semi-professionals, that is, high school teachers. Ranks 1, 2, 3, and 4 included nine, eight, sixteen, and five individuals respectively.

In addition to using the occupational rank of the head of household to assign an SES index to each informant, I have also used these occupational ranks to determine occupational mobility. (See Table I-1.) This occupational mobility I determined in all but a few cases simply by comparing the occupational rank of the head of the household in 1960 with the rank of the head of the household (whether the same head or different) in 1972, when the linguistic data was written. Thus, for example, DL's father was listed as a packer in 1960 and a janitor in 1972. His occupational mobility is therefore 0. An example of a change in head of the

TABLE I-1

Socioeconomic Status and Occupational Mobility of Informants

Inf.	1960 SES	Head of Household Occupation	1972 SES	Head of Household Occupation	Occup. Mob.
HS	4	draftsman	6	high school teacher	+2
CB	4	butcher	5	market owner	+1
RW	4	tile layer	5	small business owner	+1
MJ	2	laborer	5	garage owner	+3
ED	4	foreman	4	supervisor	0
JR	4	bricklayer	4	bricklayer	0
TA	3	recapper	4	foreman	+1
RJ	3	machine operator	4	jobster/Reverend	+1
GD	2	laborer	4	pattern designer	+2
DJ	3	assembler	3	inspector	0
CS	3	technician	3	inspector	0
DG	3	assembler	3	assembler	0
FJ	3	factory worker	3	assembler	0
EJ	3	constr. worker	3	constr. worker	0
WM	3	inspector	3	factory worker	0
HJ	2	roll handler	3	factory worker	+1
JC	2	janitor	3	factory worker	+1
LJ	2	laborer	3	inspector	+1
CM	2	driver	3	driver/Reverend	+1
CR	2	stockgirl	3	rehab. aide	+1
FI	2	doorman	3	office secretary	+1
RO	2	laborer	3	teacher's aide	+1
BD	4	foreman	3	practical nurse	-1
CH	1	unemployed	3	trimmer	+2
ME	1	unemployed	3	office secretary	+2
CG	2	driver	2	driver	0
MW	2	driver	2	driver	0
DL	2	packer	2	janitor	0
AD	2	employee	2	janitor	0
CL	2	driver	2	kitchen helper	0
HA	1	unemployed	2	laundry worker	+1
PD	3	factory worker	2	housekeeper	-1
JW	4	Mess Sgt. USArmy	2	janitor	-2
MB	3	molder	1	unemployed	-2
BT	3	machinist	1	unemployed	-2
RE	2	lift operator	1	unemployed	-1
RR	2	yardman	1	unemployed	-1
PJ	1	unemployed	1	unemployed	0
PM	1	unemployed	1	unemployed	0
WJ	1	unemployed	1	unemployed	0
WS	1	unemployed	1	unemployed	0
PH	1	(orphan)	1	(orphan)	0

household but no change in occupational rank is CL's family: in 1960 the father is listed as head of the household and he is a driver (rank 2); in 1972 the father is no longer with the family, and the mother, who is now head of the household, has a job as a kitchen helper (also rank 2). Therefore there is no change in occupational rank and no mobility. On the other hand, CB's father is an example of upward mobility; he is listed as a butcher in 1960 and as owner of a small market in 1972. This then results in a mobility of +1. Predictably, some informants' families experienced downward mobility. For example, there is BT's father, who is listed as a machinist (rank 3) in 1960, but who is unemployed in 1972. Therefore, the mobility in this case is -2.

The few examples which constitute the exceptions to this simple determination of upward or downward mobility include two families (CM's and RJ's) in which the father's occupational rank, according to his job title, remains the same, but his status has risen because he has taken on the title of "Reverend" and apparently functions as a preacher, at least part time. That this title "Reverend" has prestige is evidenced by the fact that when one of the female informants was asked what her father's occupation was, she replied, "He's a minister." She made no mention of the fact that her

father's regular salaried job was and had been for 20 years a driver at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

I arrived at the occupational mobility of the families of four other informants (CR, FI, RO, and ME) by a slightly different means. These four are all families where a female is head of the household and that female has by 1972 attained some sort of office (that is, "white collar") position. Traditionally, white collar workers are ranked above all blue collar workers. However, to list these four females at a rank of 5, above all the blue collar males, both skilled and semi-skilled, would be a quite unrealistic inflation of their real socioeconomic status. For it is a simple fact that females in clerical positions do not have the status of white collar males in our society. Another argument against assigning these women white collar status is that in each case it would involve an unrealistic rise in upward mobility of about 3 ranks. For example, CR's mother is listed as a stockgirl (!) or stockmaid during the early 1960's. By 1972, however, she has acquired an office job as a rehabilitation aide. Similarly, ME's mother is listed as a maid (that is, a domestic) and then as simply unemployed throughout the 1960's, but by 1972 she has acquired an education which has landed her a job as an office secretary. While there is no doubt that she and her family are better off

economically in 1972 than they were in 1960, it is not likely that her status in the community has risen by three or four ranks. Therefore I have assigned her and the other mothers in the four families affected by this type of occupational change to Rank 3 along with other semi-skilled workers.[5]

In order to derive a general mobility index for all informants[6] I combined the occupational mobility ranking with two other factors, which I call economic mobility and educational mobility. These latter two mobility factors do not represent changes in individual family incomes or educational levels, but rather changes in the income and educational levels of the census tracts in which the informants lived.[7]

The economic mobility factor I determined specifically by comparing economic data available on census tracts where the informants lived in 1960 with similar census data available on the individuals' place of residence in 1972.[8] (See Table I-2.) A comparison of median income levels in the thirteen tracts in West Dayton whose areas remained the same from 1960 to 1970 gave an average rise in income in the West Dayton area of $3126 over the ten-year period. (This is considerably below the average rise of $4683 for all Black families in the entire city of Dayton during this same

TABLE I-2

Determination of Economic Mobility of Each Informant

	1960 Median Level	1970 Median Level	Change	Change: +/- Above/Below Average
DJ	$4,979	$11,741	+6762	+3636
CR	3,955	9,901	5946	2910
RE	3,722	9,000	5278	2152
CS	4,790	9,920	5130	2004
LJ	3,911	8,703	4792	1666
FI	5,563	9,901	4338	1212
CL	5,573	9,901	4328	1202
RO	5,018	8,929	3911	785
HJ	4,979	8,864	3885	759
MW	"	"	"	"
CB	6,144	9,901	3757	631
FJ	"	"	"	"
WM	"	"	"	"
ED	5,573	9,117	3544	418
GD	"	"	"	"
DL	5,508	8,929	3421	295
EJ	3,452	6,765	3313	187
MJ	6,054	9,219	3165	39
RW	"	"	"	"
JC	5,573	8,703	3130	4
RR	4,163	7,271	3108	- 18
CG	6,054	9,000	2946	- 180
JR	3,911	6,765	2854	- 272
TA	"	"	"	"
ME	3,722	6,429	2707	- 419
JW	"	"	"	"
BT	"	"	"	"
AD	"	"	"	"
WS	"	"	"	"
PM	5,564	8,258	2694	- 432
DG	"	"	"	"
CH	4,618	7,271	2653	- 473
RJ	4,272	6,917	2645	- 481
HS	5,563	8,000	2437	- 689
HA	3,722	5,732	2010	-1116
MB	3,452	5,282	1830	-1296
WJ	4,163	5,732	1569	-1557
BD	"	"	"	"
CM	"	"	"	"
PJ	5,564	6,765	1201	-1925
PD	4,790	5,282	492	-2634
PH	?	8,864	--	--

period.) I then compared each individual's census tract medians with this average rise, and I gave each informant a plus or minus mobility depending upon whether the median figure in 1970 was above or below the average rise of $3126. For example, there is PD, who lived in Tract 8-6 (renumbered 0030 in 1970) and whose residence did not change from 1960 to 1972. In this tract the median income in 1960 was $4790, which is considerably above the median for Black families in Dayton in 1960 ($3932). In 1970, however, the median income for this tract was $5282 (cf. median for all Blacks in Dayton--$8615). This means an increase of only $492 since 1960 and $2634 below the average rise in West Dayton from 1960 to 1970. Therefore, this informant's economic mobility is -2634. In contrast, DJ's economic mobility is +3636 because in 1960 her family lived in Tract 8-3C, where the median income was $4979, but the family moved eventually to Tract 0014 (incidentally outside the West Dayton area), where the median income in 1970 was $11,741. These are the two extremes in income mobility. All others lie between these two figures.

I determined the educational mobility factor similarly. (See Table I-3.) The average rise in median educational level in the 13 census tracts which remained the same in area from 1960 to 1970 was .8 years. (This figure is also below the average rise of 1.3 years for

TABLE I-3

Determination of Educational Mobility of Each Informant

	1960 Median Level	1970 Median Level	Change	Change:+/- Above/Below Average
CS	8.3	11.5	+3.2	+2.4
RJ	8.9	11.4	2.5	1.7
DJ	9.8	12.1	2.3	1.5
CR	8.9	11.1	2.2	1.4
LJ	8.5	10.7	2.2	1.4
FI	9.2	11.1	1.9	1.1
MJ	9.8	11.3	1.5	.7
RW	"	"	"	"
RE	9.6	11.0	1.4	.6
HA	9.6	10.9	1.3	.5
CG	9.8	11.0	1.2	.4
HS	9.2	10.4	1.2	.4
MW	9.8	10.9	1.1	.3
WJ	"	"	"	"
BD	"	"	"	"
CM	"	"	"	"
HJ	"	"	"	"
WS	9.6	10.6	1.0	.2
JW	"	"	"	"
ME	"	"	"	"
AD	"	"	"	"
BT	"	"	"	"
PD	8.3	9.0	.7	-0.1
ED	10.8	11.4	.6	-0.2
GD	"	"	"	"
CB	10.5	11.1	"	"
FJ	"	"	"	"
WM	"	"	"	"
DL	9.0	9.6	"	"
CH	8.9	9.5	"	"
EJ	8.5	9.1	"	"
JR	"	"	"	"
PJ	"	"	"	"
TA	"	"	"	"
MB	8.5	9.0	.5	-0.3
CL	10.8	11.1	.3	-0.5
PM	8.5	8.5	0	-0.8
DG	"	"	"	"
JC	10.8	10.7	-0.1	-0.9
RR	9.8	9.5	-0.3	-1.1
RO	10.2	9.6	-0.6	-1.4
PH	?	10.9	--	--

all Black families in the entire city of Dayton during this period.) Thus, CS lived in an area with the lowest educational level in West Dayton in 1960 (8.3 years), but by 1972 he lived in a tract (outside West Dayton) where the median educational level was 11.5--an increase of 3.2 years, and a rise of 2.4 years above the average increase in West Dayton. Therefore, his educational mobility is given as 2.4. An example of an individual at the other end of this scale is RO, who lived in Tract 9-2 in 1960, where the median educational level was 10.2 years, and who did not move from this area. The tract was subdivided for the 1970 census, and the median educational level of RO's tract (0033) was then 9.6 years--a decrease of .6, and a fall of 1.4 below the average rise in educational level during the ten years. Thus her educational mobility is -1.4.

Following a model used by Labov in his New York City study (1966:216), I then combined these three mobility factors (occupational, economic, and educational mobility) and thus devised a general mobility index for each informant. (See Chart I-1 and Table I-4.) This mobility index therefore represents a combination of influences on each informant's life: it combines the occupational status of each person's family at two different stages with two environmental factors--that is, the general economic well-being of all the people in

CHART I-1

Mobility Index

Median Income Change ($)	Educational Change (Median yrs. of school)																											
	2 to 2.9						1 to 1.9						0 to 0.9						-0.1 to -0.9						-1 to -1.9			
+3,- 3,999	8	7	6	5	4	3	7	6	5	4	3	2	6	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	0	4	3	2	1	0	-1
+2,- 2,999	7	6	5	4	3	2	6	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	0	4	3	2	1	0	-1	3	2	1	0	-1	-2
+1,- 1,999	6	5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	0	4	3	2	1	0	-1	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3
0- +999	5	4	3	2	1	0	4	3	2	1	0	-1	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4
-1- -999	4	3	2	1	0	-1	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
-1,- 1,999	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6
-2,- 2,999	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7
	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	3	2	1	0	-1	-2

Occupational Change

their neighborhood and the average educational level of these people in their neighborhood.

TABLE I-4

Mobility Indexes of Informants

+4	DJ, CR, CS
+3	FI, LJ, MJ
+2	
+1	GD, ME, RE, HJ, RJ, HS, RW
0	CB, JC, CH, CL, MW
-1	HA, TA, AD, ED, CG, EJ, FJ, DL, CM, WM, RO, WS
-2	DG, WJ, PM, JR
-3	BD, PJ, BT, JW
-4	RR
-5	MB, PD

Thus, for example, DJ, at one end of the scale, has a mobility index of +4, derived from an occupational mobility of 0 (based on her father's stable ranking at 3), combined with an economic mobility of +3636 and an educational mobility of +1.5 (these factors probably being largely due to the mother's having worked for many years as an office secretary, thus allowing the family to accumulate enough money to move into a "better" neighborhood). PD, at the other end of the scale, has a mobility index of -5, derived from an occupational mobility of -1 (his parents having divorced and his mother working at a lower rank in 1972 than his father in 1960), combined with a general deterioration of the census tract where he lived, both economically (-2634) and educationally (-0.1).

I determined individual racial isolation indexes similarly, by combining three factors: 1) the percentage of Blacks in each individual's census tract in 1960, 2) the percentage of Blacks in each individual's census tract in 1970, and 3) the number of years each informant had spent in a predominantly Black (90%+) high school.[9] Racial isolation indexes range from a low of 2 to a high of 10, with most (29) informants falling in the upper ranges of 8 to 10. (See Table I-5 and accompanying Chart I-2.) To illustrate how this system works, the female with the ranking of 2 (DJ) lived in 1960 in a tract that was 85.9% Black, but in 1972 she lived in a tract that was only 3.8% Black; she had also spent all four of her high school years in schools that were predominantly White. By comparison, all of the individuals who have racial isolation indexes of 10 had lived all their lives in tracts that were more than 90% Black and had spent all four of their high school years in a predominantly Black high school.

ACT scores were available for 38 of the 42 informants in this study. (DG, PH, CL, and WS did not take the test.) Table I-6 gives the informants' Standard English Scores on this test (the highest possible Standard Score is 36 and the lowest is 1); the Table also gives percentile ranks, as compared with "2,553,376 college-

TABLE I-5

Determination of Racial Isolation Index of Each Informant

	% Blacks 1960 Tract	% Blacks 1972 Tract	Yrs. in Black High School	Racial Isolation
DJ	85.9	3.8	0	2
CG	46.3	96.0	0	4
CS	65.7	87.9	1	5
RO	67.0	94.3	0	5
JC	98.7	69.2	0	5
LJ	99.3	67.3	1*	5
WM	69.2	95.8	1	6
JR	99.3	98.4	0	6
WS	99.3	99.6	0*	6
RW	46.3	86.1	4	7
MJ	46.3	86.1	4	7
CM	87.8	95.9	2	7
CR	42.5	95.8	4	8
DG	40.0	91.6	4	8
PM	40.0	91.6	4	8
PJ	40.0	98.4	4	8
HS	76.3	96.3	3*	8
RJ[10]	74.1	88.8	4	8
ED	98.7	99.3	2*	8
AD	99.3	99.6	2	8
BT	99.3	99.6	2	8
PD	65.7	93.2	4	9
FJ	69.2	95.8	4	9
CB	69.2	95.8	4	9
FI	76.3	95.8	4	9
MW	85.9	93.9	4	9
HJ	85.9	93.9	4	9
WJ	87.8	95.9	4	9
BD	87.8	95.9	4	9
DL	88.5	94.3	4	9
RR	87.8	99.1	4	9
MB	90.9	93.2	4	10
EJ	90.9	98.4	4	10
CH	97.1	99.1	4	10
CL	98.7	95.8	4	10
GD	98.7	99.3	4	10
HA	99.3	95.9	4	10
TA	99.3	98.4	4	10
JW	99.3	99.6	4	10
ME	99.3	99.6	4	10
RE	99.3	96.0	4	10
PH	?	93.9	4	--

* = three-year high school graduate

CHART I-2

Racial Isolation Index

Years in Black High School

% Black (1972)	4				3				2				1				0			
90-100	10	9	8	7	9	8	7	6	8	7	6	5	7	6	5	4	6	5	4	3
50-89	9	8	7	6	8	7	6	5	7	6	5	4	6	5	4	3	5	4	3	2
10-49	8	7	6	5	7	6	5	4	6	5	4	3	5	4	3	2	4	3	2	1
0-9	7	6	5	4	6	5	4	3	5	4	3	2	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	0
	90+	50+	10+	0+	90+	50+	10+	0+	90+	50+	10+	0+	90+	50+	10+	0+	90+	50+	10+	0+

% Black (1960)

TABLE I-6

ACT Scores and Percentiles of Informants

Inf.	Standard English Scores	English Test Percentile Ranks
DJ	19	51
CM	17	35
RO	16	29
TA	15	23
JC	15	23
JR	15	23
HJ	14	19
WJ	14	19
JW	14	19
LJ	13	15
RJ	12	12
GD	12	12
HS	11	10
WM	11	10
PJ	10	8
DL	10	8
BT	9	6
CS	9	6
CH	9	6
MB	9	6
ME	9	6
BD	8	4
EJ	8	4
ED	8	4
FJ	8	4
MW	8	4
RE	8	4
CR	8	4
CG	7	3
PM	6	2
AD	6	2
CB	6	2
HA	6	2
MJ	5	2
PD	5	2
RR	5	2
FI	5	2
RW	3	1

bound high school students who took the ACT test from 1966-69." (Using ACT 1970:15) The majority of the informants' scores are low; 26 of the 38 who took the test scored at the tenth percentile or below, and all of the 38 had a Standard Score below 20, which is the score given by the ACT Testing Service itself as "the approximate median score of first semester college-bound high school seniors." (Using ACT 1970:14) These facts are not surprising to anyone who has done any studying of or reading about how Black students throughout the country perform on tests such as the ACT and the SAT. Their significance, in comparison with the linguistic data collected for this study, I will discuss later. (See Chapter IV, pp. 230-234.)

NOTES

CHAPTER I

[1]It is noteworthy that this article by Crystal--which reflects no awareness of variable rules--appeared four years after the New York study by Labov et al (1968), in which "inherent variability" is presented as a fundamental characteristic of the Black Vernacular.

[2]In making this statement about "relative" uniformity, I do not deny that there exist varieties of BEV itself. The data underlying this dissertation is in fact an illustration of this variety. I am stressing here, however, that there are fundamental features which a number of studies have shown that BEV speakers in different locations have in common.

[3]These ratings are explained more fully on pp. 16-30.

[4]I recognize of course that ACT scores are a different kind of variable from the other extra-linguistic variables I am investigating; that is, they are products themselves of the informants rather than socioeconomic facts about the informants.

[5]One further support I can give for assigning these people to this rank is the Minnesota Occupational Scale (1931 version), which lists semi-skilled occupations at the same rank as minor clerical positions. (Barber 1957:173)

[6]I have not assigned a general mobility index or a racial isolation index to one informant (PH) because I could not discover where he lived in the early 1960's. I have included him in the study however because I know that he lived in Dayton in 1960--in fact since he was about four years old.

[7]If I had had available to me accurate information about family incomes or educational levels, I would of course have preferred to use this more specific data in determining general mobility. However, I early discovered that it would be impossible to get this kind of information

simply by asking people directly without knowing them all intimately. One informant, for example, told me that both of his parents were college graduates. Yet the Williams' City Directory consistently (over a period of 10 to 15 years) listed his father's occupation as a "driver." It is of course very unlikely (though not impossible) that the father did indeed have a college degree. My decision, therefore, to use census data was simply a matter of necessity--no other more accurate personal data being available. I recognize the shortcomings of this approach, but I also argue that comparative census data has some validity in indicating whether an individual has moved to a "better" neighborhood or whether the neighborhood she or he lives in has deteriorated over a period of time.

[8]The census data of course actually represents the year 1970, not 1972. I am making the assumption that these figures reflect faily accurately the figures for 1972.

[9]Ideally of course it would be desirable to know about the racial composition of each person's elementary school as well, but this information was not available. At any rate, in the absence of busing, the tract percentages reflect this factor quite well.

[10]Actually ED spent one and a half, not two, years in a black high school. The figure has been rounded off for convenience in presenting the table.

CHAPTER II

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

The Linguistic Data

The data which I have analyzed for this study consists of 351 papers--the majority of them freshman English themes--written by the 42 Dayton informants.[1] This represents an approximate total of over 100,000 words (an average paper being about 300 words) and an average of 8.3 papers per student.

The actual number of papers per student, however, ranged from 2 to 17. This number varies according to simple availability. The data is limited for some informants because they did not return all their papers to their instructors, and for several other students because they wrote only a few papers before withdrawing from class or from school. On the other hand, for eleven of the informants, there are papers representing two succeeding quarters in freshman English. In Chapter IV, I comment on some of the differences in the percentages of certain variables between the early papers of the first quarter and papers from the second quarter.

The Linguistic Variables

For the particular linguistic variables I have studied here, I have depended primarily on previous work by Walt Wolfram and Ralph Fasold. In 1970 in an article entitled "Some Linguistic Features of Negro Dialect," Fasold and Wolfram presented a succinct, non-technical explanation, a summary of "the information currently available on the linguistic features of Negro dialect" (1970:41); that is, those "pronunciation and grammatical features which are not shared by other dialects."[2] (1970:42) I have selected a number of these features for close study in the writing of my 42 informants. My selection of these particular features was based upon several factors. First of all, each variable had to be well defined and its potential occurrences easy to determine. Thus, for example, I have excluded "invariant _be_" from the variables I have systematically studied because of the difficulty of isolating all its potential occurrences.[3] Each variable also had to be readily apparent in writing--not strictly speaking just a phonological variable--not something that could be easily disguised by spelling practices. Thus I rejected all of the features which Fasold and Wolfram discuss under the heading "pronunciation" (pp. 43-58) except for the alternation between _a_ and _an_ before vowels and the deletion of indefinite _a_, because these features,

though apparent in speech, might not be reflected in writing.[4] For example, I excluded "the use of the -in suffix for -ing (e.g. singin', buyin', swimin')" and "the use of a nasalized vowel instead of the nasal consonant" (p. 55) because an individual might pronounce the -ing as [ɪn] but regularly write it -ing and similarly might pronounce rum or run or rung as [rə̃] but never write any of these words as *ru.[5]

In addition, I have rejected a few of the variables discussed by Fasold and Wolfram because of their restricted occurrence in my data to the writing of one or two individuals. I have, therefore, not measured the occurrence of ain't because only one person ever wrote ain't, and I have not measured the potential occurrence of the perfectives been and done because only one female wrote a sentence with perfective been, and not a single individual wrote a sentence with perfective done.[6]

The variables which I have therefore chosen for systematic measurement and analysis include the following:

1) the absence vs. the presence of the ed suffix; e.g. "she look up and said" and "he's consider good"[7]
2) the absence vs. the presence of the third person singular verb suffix s (including the alternation between have/has and do/does); e.g. "he make a corny joke," "he always have

a necktie," and "what do freedom mean?"

3) the absence vs. the presence of the possessive suffix 's;[8] e.g. "in today government"

4) the absence vs. the presence of the regular noun plural suffix s; e.g. "if he saw condition as they exist"

5) the absence vs. the presence of the adverbial suffix s;[9] e.g. "sometime they are boring" and "he alway talks"

6) the absence vs. the presence of copula/auxiliary be forms (including (a)m, (i)s, and (a)re)); e.g. "I going to take some more math," "she not afraid," and "they now becoming quite unruly"

7) the use of is vs. are as a plural verb; e.g. "things is going right"

8) the use of was vs. were as a plural verb; e.g. "things wasn't the same"

9) the use of irregular past tense forms vs. irregular participial forms as past participles and the reverse of this; i.e. the use of irregular participles as irregular past tense verbs; e.g. "we have came a long way" and "I seen all those D's and F's"

10) the use of a or ∅ vs. an as the indefinite

article before a vowel; e.g. "I played it off as a itch" and "we did experiment"

11) the absence vs. the presence of the indefinite article before consonants; e.g. "your car must have sticker"

12) the use of multiple vs. single negation; e.g. "you don't have noone to look over you"

13) the use of existential *it* vs. *there*; e.g. "it is about 300 people living in the Residence Hall"

14) the use of objective vs. nominative pronouns as subjects;[10] e.g. "my mother and her did not lose their friendship"

15) the use of inverted (or direct question) word order vs. noninverted (or indirect question) word order in embedded questions; e.g. "I asked him where was my chicken"

In addition to the preceding 15 variables I have also measured several features which have been previously identified as hypercorrections among Black speakers "attempting to use Standard English." (Fasold and Wolfram 1970:77) These include:

1) the presence vs. the absence of the irregular noun plural suffix *s*; e.g. "peoples now need a education"

2) the use of _are_ vs. _is_ as a singular verb; e.g. "one of the best things that has happened to schools are rap sessions"

3) the use of _were_ vs. _was_ as a singular verb; e.g. "when I were refused from a job" and "when a dance were to be held"

4) the use of _an_ vs. _a_ as the indefinite article before consonants; e.g. "my father is an pattern designer"

5) the presence vs. the absence of an _s_ suffix on third plural verbs;[11] e.g. "girls who loves sports" and "the blacks has been deprived"

One other item which I will discuss, although I did not measure its occurrences in the same way as the preceding 20 variables, is the use of non-interrogative _which_, both as a relative and as a nonrelative; e.g. "a good teacher which try hard" and "the world in which they will some day be a part of" as well as "My father did find time for us to[o]. Which most black father has no time for his kids."

Procedure

I have used the following procedure in measuring the 20 variables (excluding _which_) that I have just mentioned: I have counted the total number of potential

occurrences of each variable on every paper by every informant, and I have computed the percentage of the BEV variant of each variable for each informant. Thus, for example, EJ had 28 potential occurrences of the regular past tense suffix ed. Nineteen (or 67.9%) of these occurred without the past tense marker.

Occasionally there were ambiguous constructions where, for example, the tense of a verb could be either present or past or the number of a noun could be interpreted as either singular or plural. I have tried to resolve as many of these ambiguities as possible by considering carefully the student's total percentage of occurrence of the variants in question. For example, one student (BD) wrote the following sentence: "Once out of every two weeks he lecture, still goes strictly from the book, but have discussion after each session." The noun phrase represented by discussion in this sentence is structurally ambiguous; that is, the sentence could be an illustration of a deleted indefinite a before the noun or of the absence of the s noun plural marker after the noun. The probability of this being a case of deleted a, however, is very slight compared with the likelihood that this is an example of noun plural s absence, because this particular informant has a very low percentage of article deletion (4.8%, which represents 5 deletions out of 104 potential cases) and a high percentage of

noun plural s absence (41.9%, representing 67 out of 160 potential occurrences). Thus, I have counted the item in the above example as an example of noun plural s absence.

However, there were times when even such a careful analysis was not decisive. For instance, the same student (BD) wrote "I hope for his sake not to show his feeling to the students," in which the number of the noun feeling is unclear; it may be an intended plural and it may not. It is impossible to resolve the ambiguity in this case because the possessive his rather than a possible zero determiner precedes the noun.

Other examples of unresolved ambiguities include the sentence "You can get in discussion group with others"; in this case the loss of a plural marker after group seems unlikely (though not impossible) because the informant's (CM) total percentage of plural nouns without s is only 3.3% (3 out of 92 examples). However, the alternative explanation (that a was deleted before discussion) is also unlikely because this student has no other examples of deleted a (or in fact any unstressed vowel) in all her writing. Therefore the case remains ambiguous.

Examples in which tense is ambiguous include the sentence "A student knows how much he learn out of his or her class." The tense of learn is ambiguous; it may

illustrate the absence of final d or final s. There are also no "contextual clues" to help resolve the ambiguity. Furthermore the student's total percentage of deleted past tense d on all papers is 23.1% (3 out of 13 instances); on the other hand his total percentage of deleted third singular s is 28.3% (13 out of 46 instances). The percentage difference between his total absence of d and his total absence of s is therefore too close to decide whether this is an example of a past tense or a present tense verb, and I have disregarded the example in computing his percentages.

After figuring individual percentages of each BEV variant for each informant, I determined group percentages of each BEV feature. For example, I determined that for the total number of informants who wrote at least one clause with a potential double negative, the mean percentage of double negatives was 14.0%, and I determined that for those 12 individuals with at least one double negative clause, the mean was 30.9%. I discuss the significance of these and other group percentages in Chapter IV.

In my individual discussions in Chapter III of each of the 20 linguistic variables, I attempt to measure the degree of correlation between those using the BEV variant and the selected extra-linguistic factors

(sex, socioeconomic status, mobility, racial isolation, and ACT scores). Where there has been previous research on the feature, I also compare my results with that research.

One of the main points of my research is to study "inherent variability," that is, to discover the conditions under which the BEV variant is favored or not favored to occur. To this end, I have analyzed several of the major variables statistically by means of the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program:[12] a FORTRAN computer program that uses a maximum likelihood estimation procedure to calculate probabilities for the various features of a variable rule. This program, which rests on the assumptions that each feature operates independently (i.e. its contribution is independent of the contribution of every other feature) in the rule and that the combined effect of all the features is multiplicative, provides both a non-applications probabilities model and an applications probabilities model. The non-applications model indicates which features <u>favor</u> the application of the rule and in which order; that is, the higher the feature weight (the closer it approximates 1), the greater effect the feature has on the rule. Thus, as an example from Labov's research on deletion of the copula, the probabilities assigned by the non-applications model to the various syntactic environments

following the copula were as follows: following noun phrase = 0.0; following adjective or locative = 0.13; following verb (other than gonna) = 0.44; and following gonna = 0.90. (From Cedergren and Sankoff 1974:351) What these figures mean is that following gonna has a greater effect on deletion than any other verb, which in turn has a greater effect than a following predicate adjective or locative, which in turn has a greater effect than a following noun phrase. The applications probabilities model works in reverse, indicating the order in which various features restrain the application of a rule.

After assigning probabilities to the various features, the program also predicts the number of times the rule should apply in each environment and compares these predictions with the actually observed numbers of times the rule did apply. Of course the closer the predictions are to the actually observed frequencies, the lower the chi square for each cell and the lower the total chi square. The particular model which I cite in my discussions of the different variables, then, depends upon which one is the better fit with the data; that is, which one results in the lower chi squares.

The particular variables which I have studied using this program include the absence vs. the presence of the d past tense and past participle suffix, the absence

vs. the presence of the third singular verb suffix s, the absence vs. the presence of the noun plural suffix s, the absence vs. the presence of the copula, the variation between a and an before a vowel, the variation between is and are as plural verbs, the variation between was and were as plural verbs, and the presence vs. the absence of the third plural verb suffix s.

Finally, after analyzing each of the variables independently, I computed conglomerate totals and a conglomerate BEV ranking (as well as a hypercorrection ranking) for each informant. To get each person's conglomerate total, I added together that person's BEV percentages for the 15 linguistic variables[13] listed on pp. 39-41; then to get their rank I divided by the total number of variables (i.e. 15) excepting those for which the person had no examples. Thus, as an illustration, CR had individual percentages of 33.8% d absence, 2.5% s third singular absence, 0.8% s noun plural absence, 16% copula deletion, and 28.6% a before vowels. This equals a total of 81.7. This total I divided by 15, the number of variables for which he had at least one example. His BEV conglomerate ranking then was 5.45.

The data for CR was fortunately very full--very complete on almost every variable; however, for some informants data was quite limited on certain variables. I have tried to compensate for limited data in this

way: I reduced the weight of a percentage when it represented less than at least five potential occurrences of the variable. Using a sliding scale of adjustment, I counted one potential occurrence as only one-fifth, or 20%; two potential occurrences as two-fifths, or 40%; three potential occurrences as three-fifths, or 60%; and four potential occurrences as four-fifths, or 80%. Thus, as a result, a percentage of 50 never represents just one out of two or two out of four, but always at least three out of six.

As an illustration of how this method works, CG had only three potential occurrences of the deleted copula; one of these he did delete. Using the adjusted scale, his percentage of deleted copula is counted as 20%, which is three-fifths or 60% of 33.3% (his percentage before applying the adjusted scale). Another example is RR. His three potential occurrences of a/an before a vowel were all realized as a. But instead of counting this limited number of occurrences as 100% deletion, I counted it as three-fifths of 100, or 60%. These reduced percentages therefore help to compensate for the fact that the linguistic data is more limited for some individuals than for others. The only drawback to this kind of measurement is that it is of course impossible to adjust those percentages which represent 0 out of 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 potential occurrences, since zero multiplied

by anything always equals zero. What this means then is that for some individuals the BEV totals are not as high as they would be if the data were more complete. The actual number of individuals affected by this, however, is few; they include RR and ED, two of the highest scoring individuals, as well as CG, JR, WM, and BT, who have much lower conglomerate totals.

After figuring conglomerate totals and rankings for each individual, I ran this data through a computer program for multiple linear regression: a FORTRAN scientific subroutine package for the IBM Model 360 computer. My purpose was to measure the correlation between all the linguistic variables and the extra-linguistic variables (i.e. socioeconomic status, mobility, racial isolation, and ACT scores).[14] I report on the results of this activity in Chapter IV.

I also used both individual percentages of BEV variants and the conglomerate rankings of the individuals to verify whether there was evidence of implicational scaling among the informants; that is, whether the fact that an informant had a certain variant or a certain percentage of a variant (for example, the deleted copula) implied that he or she also used another variant (for example, the absence of the third singular _s_), and in turn whether the use of that variant implied the use of a third variant (for example the absence of the _d_

suffix), etc.

In all of these ways I examined the relative weights of the different BEV variants and why they occur when they occur.

NOTES

CHAPTER II

[1]I was very careful to use as data only papers whose author authenticity was reliable. The 351 papers, with very few exceptions, were written in the college classroom. I have not included in my analysis forms corrected in response to instructors' comments nor of course forms quoted from another writer. The only out of class papers that I have included in my data are those which obviously had not been proofread by anyone else except the writer. For example, I admitted as part of the data a paper typed by DJ, which included many gross spelling and typing errors and also a number of word repetitions; e.g. orginated for originated, circimference for circumference, th for to, stiking for striking, wear wear for wear, and did did for did. All of these forms are evidence that the paper was not proofread or revised by another hand.

[2]Actually some of the features which Fasold and Wolfram discuss in this article are shared by other dialects, especially Southern States English. See, for example, Juanita Williamson's discussion of Southern American use of Existential it (1971:434-436) and Raven McDavid's reference to numerous features which are shared by educated speakers (both Black and White) of the South (1973:264-266). However, as Wolfram has pointed out (1974:498-500), the "anecdotal evidence" offered by "mainstream dialect geographers" like Williams and McDavid is not sufficient; it has not been subjected to the rigorous statistical examination which characterizes the investigations of BEV by Labov, Wolfram, Fasold, and others. There is, therefore, no substantial evidence to date which denies the significant quantitative differences between the speech of Blacks and Whites as well as several undeniable qualitative differences (e.g. invariant be); That is, apparent similarities between BEV and Southern White speech are often superficial. For example, the absence of the third singular present tense verb marker in BEV is an inherent part of that dialect's system, while its absence in the speech of some Southern Whites is infrequent and always alternates with the presence of +s third singular verb. (Wolfram 1971a:145)

[3]Another important reason for not computing percentages of "invariant be" is the simple fact that there are no clear-cut examples of what Fasold and Wolfram call "distributive or non-tense be" (1970:67) in all my data. The few examples of apparent finite be which do occur may all be explained by the deletion of contracted will or would before the be. I discuss these examples in the section on the deleted copula in Chapter III.

[4]Besides the practical fact that pronunciation features are not so easily apparent in writing as grammatical features, another important reason for concentrating on grammatical features is that they are more heavily stigmatized. As Roger Shuy states, "speakers tend to accept pronunciation differences much more than grammatical variations." (1973:309)

[5]I discuss this matter of spelling vs. pronunciation again in the analysis of /-t,d/ deletion in Chapter III.

[6]I have also not counted the possible absence of have (technically [v] or [z]) before been because the use of been without an auxiliary was so rare in the data (occurring only six times).

[7]The examples quoted here and throughout the dissertation are all from the data I have collected and analyzed.

[8]The apostrophe, of course, is a simple mark of punctuation. I have disregarded its presence or absence.

[9]Adverbial s is mentioned by Wolfram in his Detroit study. See Note 13 of Detroit Negro Speech (1969:56). He did not, however, statistically measure its use.

[10]This feature is mentioned by Wolfram and Fasold in "Towards Reading Materials for Speakers of Black English." (1969:152)

[11]I have limited my study of "hypercorrect" s to its presence at the end of third plural verbs because it was very rarely used elsewhere; that is, in all the data, it occurred only two or three times at the ends of first or second person verbs.

[12]I have two criteria for selecting the variables to analyze by means of the Cedergren/Sankoff computer program: 1) They were all variables with an overall percentage of occurrence of 5% or more. 2) They were

variables for which the potential number of occurrences was high or very high. The variable with the fewest potential occurrences which I analyzed in this way was a before vowels (281 potential occurrences).

[13]I excluded from this total, the percentages for irregular past participles being used as past tense verbs, since as I explain later, this variant may be a hypercorrection.

[14]The extra-linguistic variable sex was not, of course, measured in this way because sex is not a linear variable.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE LINGUISTIC VARIABLES

In this chapter I discuss individually each of the linguistic features which I have chosen for study. For each feature, I give the total percentage of occurrence as well as individual informants' percentages of occurrence of the feature. Whenever information is available I make comparisons of my findings with results obtained in other studies.[1] I also draw conclusions as to the apparent significance of each feature based primarily on that feature's frequency of occurrence.

Furthermore, I discuss the correlation of each feature with the particular extra-linguistic factors which I have selected for comparison.[2] When discussing these correlations I often refer to how far above or below the norm the mean for those individuals using the feature is. Thus, as an illustration, I say of those informants using indefinite a instead of an before vowels that their mean racial isolation index "reflects the norm." These "norms" which I refer to have been determined in the most straightforward way; they represent the means for the entire group of Dayton informants. Thus the "norm" (or group mean) SES level for 1960 is 2.40; the "norm" SES level for 1972 is 2.89;

the "norm" or mean mobility index is -0.44; the "norm" or mean racial isolation index is 7.97; and the "norm" or mean standard ACT score is 9.8.

Regarding my analyses of certain major variables, I discuss constraints on the occurrence of the BEV feature. This dissertation is an experiment in this respect in that it is a first attempt to apply the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program to written data. This attempt proves to be quite successful, for the computer analyses are quite valuable in giving insights into the particular environments in which the BEV features occur.

When employing the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program, I generally give charts taken directly from the computer read-outs. These charts include three columns, labeled Env., Obs., and Exp., which represent Environment, Observed, and Expected respectively. The column on the left, labeled Env., indicates the various environments in which the variable occurred. For example, in my discussion of the use of a before vowels, this column begins with the symbols MHUN, where M means the writer is male, H indicates the following syntactic environment is a headword, U indicates the following phonological environment is an unstressed vowel, and N means the following phonological environment also includes a nasal consonant. The second column of the

chart contains two numbers separated by a slash; the number on the left is the actual number of examples of the feature (in this case a) observed in that environment;[3] the number to the right of the slash indicates the total number of potential occurrences of the feature in that environment. Thus the numbers 0/3 indicate that a actually occurred zero times out of three potential occurrences in that environment. The third column is a series of numbers which are the expected number of occurrences of the feature in each environment as calculated by the computer. Thus, using the same example as before, the computer predicted that a would occur 0.73 times in that environment. Naturally, the closer these predicted numbers in column 3 are to the actually observed numbers in column 2, the lower the chi squares and the better the data fits.

Now, having given these explanations of the basic methods I have used in analyzing the data, I will proceed with the individual discussions of that data.

d absence:

/-t,d/ deletion is a characteristic of the Black English Vernacular which has been studied carefully and in great detail by a number of linguists, notably Labov et al in New York (1968), Wolfram in Detroit (1969), and Fasold in Washington, D. C. (1972). The

similarity of the findings of these linguists and their general agreement on the constraints operating on /-t,d/ deletion are, as Labov states, a remarkable confirmation of the uniformity of the Vernacular in the United States, "especially in the inner city areas." (1972a:xiii)

In this section I will examine the significance of /-t,d/ deletion among the Dayton informants, comparing my findings with those of previous studies. I am confining my discussion, however, to the absence of the -ed suffix from past tense forms and past participles; that is, I am not concerned here with /-t,d/ deletion among words which are monomorphemic.[4]

Bimorphemic /-t,d/ deletion was a feature shared by almost all the Dayton informants; 37 of the 42 showed at least one instance of d absence. The total number of potential d occurrences among all 42 informants was 2318; 337 (14.5%) of these were deleted.[5] Since nearly all the informants showed some deletion and since the number of potential occurrences was so great, I made no attempt to correlate the various extra-linguistic factors with all 37 informants, nor did I try to analyze the constraints on /-t,d/ deletion on the basis of all these informants. Instead, my intensive analysis of the variable concerned only those individuals with 10% or more /-t,d/ deletion.

There were 19 of these individuals (10 males and

9 females). The mean percentage of d absence among them was 34.7% (287 out of 828 potential occurrences). /-t,d/ deletion among these informants showed no correlation with any of the extra-linguistic factors. The mean SES level was 2.63 in 1960 and 2.89 in 1972--both near the norm for the entire Dayton group. Mobility was downward for more of the individuals than upward, but the mean was again very near the norm for the whole Dayton group: -0.4. Likewise, racial isolation indexes were high for most of the 19 individuals, but the mean, which was 8.1, was also near the norm for the whole group. Similarly, ACT scores of the 19 individuals were at the norm; that is, the 6th percentile; their mean Standard score was 9.0. Sex was also not a factor. There was 36% d absence among the males and 34% absence among the females--an insignificant difference.

Although these various extra-linguistic factors showed no strong correlation for the Dayton informants, I was able to determine the relative significance of various phonological constraints on /-t,d/ deletion. A number of these constraints were first discussed by Labov et al in their analysis of the use of BEV among Harlem youth (1968:123-157). In that analysis, Labov concludes that there are three major constraints on /-t,d/ deletion: "The most important effect . . . is that a consonant precede the -t,d--that is, that we

TABLE III-1

The Relationship of d Absence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	Tot.%	%Past	#/ Pot.#	%P.P.	#/ Pot.#	SES 60	SES 72	Mob.	Rac. Is.	Sex	ACT
RR	75.0%	50.0%	1/2	77.8%	14/18	2	1	-4	9	M	5
EJ	66.7	67.9	19/28	64.3	9/14	3	3	-1	10	M	8
BD	52.8	50.0	38/76	59.4	19/32	4	3	-3	9	F	8
HJ	47.6	42.9	3/7	50.0	7/14	2	3	+1	9	F	14
FJ	47.1	66.7	6/9	40.0	10/25	3	3	-1	9	M	8
CB	46.4	40.5	15/37	57.9	11/19	4	5	0	9	F	6
PM	39.7	33.3	9/27	45.2	14/31	1	1	-2	8	F	6
CH	35.1	23.5	4/17	40.0	16/40	1	3	0	10	M	9
CR[6]	33.8	35.3	12/34	30.3	10/33	2	3	+4	8	M	8
BT	30.0	16.7	1/6	50.0	2/4	3	1	-3	8	F	9
PH	29.6	41.7	5/12	20.0	3/15	1	1	--	--	M	--
PD	26.2	42.1	8/19	13.0	3/23	3	2	-5	9	M	5
GD	25.0	19.0	4/21	33.3	5/15	2	4	+1	10	F	12
LJ	24.4	20.0	4/20	28.0	7/25	2	3	+3	5	F	13
DG	23.1	----	----	23.1	3/13	3	3	-2	8	M	--
ED	20.0	25.0	2/8	17.6	3/17	4	4	-1	8	M	8
DJ	12.5	13.3	2/15	12.2	6/49	3	3	+4	2	F	19
RJ	11.7	9.1	3/33	14.8	4/27	3	4	+1	8	F	12
RW	9.5	11.1	3/27	6.7	1/15	4	5	+1	7	M	3

are dealing with a cluster" (136); and "the second . . . effect is the influence of a following vowel: anything which is not a vowel favors the rule." (137) A third effect of prime importance in inhibiting /-t,d/ deletion is "the effect of a preceding morpheme boundary." (127)[7]

Since Labov's first analysis, Wolfram has investigated the variable further in Detroit (1969:57-82), in large part confirming Labov's findings, and Fasold has followed with a long discussion of the status of the past tense among Washington, D. C. informants and a further analysis of the constraints on /-t,d/ deletion. (1972:38-120) At the conclusion of his analysis, Fasold gives the following hierarchy of constraints: (1972:98)

(1) Deletable consonant preceded by another consonant;

(2) Deletable consonant not followed by a word beginning with a vowel;

(3) Boundary does not intervene between deletable consonant and preceding consonant;

(4a) Final and prefinal consonants separated by a formative boundary;

(4b) Syllable ending in the deletable consonant has weak accent;

(5) Deletable consonant is preceded by a sonorant consonant;

(6) Deletable consonant is preceded by a continuant consonant.

Fasold also discusses the deletion of [±d]; that is,

the absence of the -ed suffix after bases like start and want and separate. He notes that among the Washington, D. C. informants "[ɨd] was absent in a considerable number of cases although at a lower percentage rate than [t] or [d], whether in clusters or not." (99)

In my analysis of the Dayton informants I will compare my results regarding both /-t,d/ and /ɨd/ deletion with those of Fasold. I will further follow his method of discussion, dividing my analysis of /-t,d/ deletion into three parts: first a discussion of deletion after bases ending in a vowel, secondly a discussion of deletion after bases ending in a consonant other than t or d, and third a discussion of deletion after bases ending in t or d.

Fasold reports that among the Washington, D. C. working class speakers [d] was absent 27.3% of the time (33 out of 121 potential occurrences) from verbs ending in a vowel. He presents a table which illustrates the difference in effect for these verbs between environments involving a following vowel and those involving a following consonant or pause. Below I have reproduced this table, and beneath it is a comparable set of figures, illustrating my findings for the Dayton informants:

Washington, D. C. informants:

Effect of following environment on the presence of [d] representing the -ed suffix.

(Fasold 1972:44 Table 7)

	__##V	__##(C)[8]
Present	47	41
Absent	7	26
Percent absent	13.0	38.8

Dayton informants:

	__##V	__##(C)[9]
Present	22	35
Absent	4	13
Percent absent	15.4	27.1

These figures illustrate that for the Dayton informants, as for the Washington, D. C. informants, a following vowel constrains /-d/ deletion, though absence occurs sometimes, e.g. "my mother try everything she knew"; and although the percentage of deletion is less in the pre-consonantal position for the Dayton informants than for the Washington informants, the relationship between a following vowel and a following consonant are quite similar to Fasold's results.

Fasold also examined the effect of stress; that is, whether the preceding vowel was accented or not.

Below I have reproduced his table, illustrating this effect, and have drawn up a similar table to illustrate the effect of accent for the Dayton informants:

Washington, D. C. informants:

Effect of the accent of the preceding vowel on the presence of [d] representing the -ed suffix.

(Fasold 1972:45 Table 8)

	V́	V̌
Present	63	23
Absent	15	18
Percent absent	19.0	43.9

Dayton informants:

	V́	V̌
Present	49	8
Absent	14	3
Percent absent	22.2	27.3

Regarding this constraint, the Dayton informants show no appreciable difference between stressed vowels (e.g. "some of the students try but my teacher didn't believe in that") and unstressed vowels (e.g. "I continue on to have trouble"). This lack of difference is very likely due to limited data, however, for unstressed vowels in bases ending in a vowel. For, as I will show shortly, the difference which Fasold has observed

between these environments does show up for the Dayton informants when verb bases ending in a consonant are considered.

A third constraint which Fasold illustrates is the difference in /-t,d/ deletion when the -ed represents the past tense as opposed to all other participial uses. His table for the Washington, D. C. informants and my own table for the Dayton informants follow:

Washington, D. C. informants:

Effect of grammatical function on the presence of [d] representing the -ed suffix.

(Fasold 1972:46 Table 9)

	Past Tense	Other Functions
Present	64	24
Absent	13	20
Percent absent	16.9	45.5

Dayton informants:

	Past Tense	Other Functions
Present	33	24
Absent	11	6
Percent absent	25.0	20.0

A comparison of these figures shows a clear difference between Fasold's findings and my own. Among the

Washington informants there was obviously a grammatical constraint on /-t,d/ deletion; the -ed was less likely to be deleted from the past tense than it was from participles. The Dayton data, however, shows a slight trend in the opposite direction--more /-t,d/ deletion among past tense verbs (e.g. "this woman reply to me") than among participles (e.g. "maybe worry, but not scared.") This difference between -ed loss after past tense verbs and after participles is too little to be significant, however, and as we will see, my results do not disagree with Fasold on this matter when it comes to bases ending in a consonant; in that environment neither of us found any appreciable difference between deletion from past tense verbs and deletion from participles.

Before presenting his figures on /-t,d/ deletion after bases ending in a consonant, Fasold explains his exclusion of [r] as a consonant. He refers to Wolfram's remark that "where r does occur . . . it has the same effect as the vocalic environment." (1969:131), and Fasold concludes by confirming Wolfram's observation. He explains that among the Washington informants [d] deletion after [r] occurred 30.4% of the time, compared with 27.3% deletion after vowels.

Among the Dayton informants, however, r appears to have a more intermediate effect. The percentage of d absence after r was 39.1%, compared with 23% absence

after vowels and 47.5% absence after consonants other than t or d. Because of its intermediate status between consonants and vowels, I therefore maintained a separate category for r in running the variable rule analysis programs on /-t,d/ deletion (See p. 75), and I have not included r in the calculations which follow regarding consonant cluster simplification.

Three tables which Fasold presents regarding /-t,d/ deletion after consonants (i.e. consonant cluster simplification) are relevant to the data available for the Dayton informants. These include a table illustrating the effect of a following vowel, consonant, or pause; another table showing the effect of a preceding sonorant, spirant, or stop; and a third table illustrating the effect of being in an accented or unaccented syllable. The first of these is given below and followed by a comparable table on the Dayton informants:

Washington, D. C. informants:

Comparison of the effect of three following environments on final bimorphemic cluster simplification.

(Fasold 1972:67 Table 15)

	__##V	__##	__##C
Intact	144	10	34
Simplified	58	27	109
Percent simplified	28.7	73.0	76.2

Dayton informants:

	__##V	__##	__##C
Intact	74	32	131
Simplified	55	23	136
Percent simplified	42.6	41.8	50.9[10]

There are two significant differences between the results reported by Fasold and the results for the Dayton informants: First of all is the fact that Fasold found a marked difference in deletion between the prevocalic and the preconsonantal environments. Deletion before consonants occurred for the Washington, D. C. informants nearly three times as often as it occurred before vowels. Among the Dayton informants the difference is not nearly so great, though to be sure, deletion before consonants (e.g. "when I came . . . I change my mind") did occur more often than deletion before vowels (e.g. "as it turn out").

Secondly, Fasold found no significant difference between the prepausal and preconsonantal environments; yet the Dayton data indicates that the prepausal environment was more similar to the prevocalic environment than the preconsonantal environment.[11] In this respect the Dayton informants show a greater similarity to Wolfram's Detroit informants than to the Washington, D. C. informants or Labov's New York informants. For Labov's

conclusion was that "anything which is not a vowel favors the rule" (1968:137), but Wolfram reports that "the crucial distinction is between environments in which a consonant follows immediately and those in which it does not," (1969:61), and he gives the following percentages of /-t,d/ deletion for LMN (lower middle-class negroes), UWN (upper working-class negroes), and LWN (lower working-class negroes):

Detroit informants:

(Wolfram 1969:68 Fig. 9)

	Follow. Cons.	Follow. Non-Cons.
LMN	61.7	13.3
UWN	72.5	24.3
LWN	76.0	33.9

Figures for the Dayton informants according to this means of division are as follows:

50.9 42.4

It is therefore clear that although the difference between the two environments is not as marked in the writing of the Dayton informants as it is in the speech of the Detroit informants, the relationship between consonantal and non-consonantal environments is similar for the Dayton and Detroit informants, and the data does not support the opposition between vocalic and nonvocalic which both Labov and Fasold found to be significant for

their informants.

Fasold and Wolfram also studied the effect of the nature of the preceding consonant on /-t,d/ deletion. Wolfram found that "stop + stop clusters show a lower percentage of absence than the spirant + stop and nasal/ lateral + stop." (1969:71) The figures which he gives for these environments are as follows:

Percentage of Final Cluster Member Absent

(Wolfram:1969:70 Fig. 11)

	St + St	Na/Lat + St	Sp + St
LMN	3.3	14.7	20.6
UWN	12.1	25.0	31.5
LWN	16.1	40.7	34.3

Wolfram's explanation for this difference in the amount of /-t,d/ deletion, particularly between stop + stop clusters and other consonants + stop clusters has to do with the continued air stream accompanying spirants, nasals, and laterals (all of which he calls continuants). He notes that "the observed difference in frequency lies in the potential for lengthening that is found in the continuants as opposed to stops." (1969:71)

Following Wolfram's subdivision of the preceding consonantal environment, Fasold arrives at the following results for the Washington, D. C. informants:

Comparison of the effect of three types of preceding consonants on final bimorphemic cluster simplification

(Fasold 1972:70 Table 17)

	Sonorants__##	Spirants__##	Stops__##
Intact	54	57	77
Simplified	93	55	46
Percent simplified	63.3	49.1	37.4

My own results for the Dayton informants are as follows:

	Sonorants__##	Spirants__##	Stops__##
Intact	53	131	46
Simplified	64	103	35
Percent simplified	54.7	44.0	43.2

Although the difference between the three environments is not as great for the Dayton informants as for the Washington, D. C. informants, the relationships between the categories are still maintained, and sonorants definitely favor deletion more among both groups than either stops or spirants. For example, deletion is more common in sentences like "when I got off the diet I gain more weight" than in sentences like "we rap almost all night long" or "everybody laugh but the teacher."

A comparison of Fasold's results regarding "the effect of stress and the absence of stress on final bimorphemic cluster simplification" with data for the Dayton informants is even more striking. Below I have

reproduced Fasold's table concerning this phenomenon and following it is a comparable table for the Dayton informants:

Washington, D. C. informants:

Comparison of the effect of stress and the absence of stress on final bimorphemic cluster simplification.

(Fasold 1972:75 Table 19)

	Stressed Syllables	Unstressed Syllables
Intact	164	9
Simplified	117	21
Percent simplified	41.6	70.0

Dayton informants:

	Stressed Syllables	Unstressed Syllables
Intact	207	30
Simplified	164	50
Percent simplified	44.2	62.5

Here the figures show a close parallel between the Washington, D. C. and the Dayton informants.

Also similar are the results regarding the effect of the grammatical function of the -ed suffix. Fasold reports that "whether or not the final [t] or [d] of a consonant cluster represents a past tense -ed or a participle or an adjectival -ed had a very slight effect

on its frequency of deletion. Of the 299 potential past tense clusters, 49.5% were simplified. Of the 83 adjectival and participial bimorphemic clusters, 55.4% were simplified." He concludes "the difference was not significant." (1972:75) By comparison, for the Dayton informants there were 214 potential past tense clusters, 48.6% of which were simplified (e.g. "when we walk through the halls") and 237 adjectival and participial clusters, 46.4% of which were simplified (e.g. "I was ask to go" and "I felt oppress because . . . "). Thus, as for the Washington, D. C. informants, there was no apparent difference between the two categories for the Dayton informants.

Regarding the absence of -ed when it follows a coronal stop (t or d), Fasold gives no figures for comparison of the Washington, D. C. informants. However, my figures for the Dayton informants confirm Fasold's generalization that /ɨd/ deletion occurs but at a lower frequency than /-t,d/ deletion; /ɨd/ was deleted 18 out of 205 potential occurrences, or 8.8% of the time, compared with 43.2% /-t,d/ deletion (264 out of 611 occurrences). Unlike Fasold, however, I did not find that any particular words were responsible for a high percentage of the /ɨd/ deletion. In fact 17 different verbs were involved in the 18 instances of /ɨd/ deletion, including such words as "suggest," "relate," "surround," "distribute," and "boycott,"

as well as several more common words, such as "want," "start," and "decide."

All of the phenomena which I have so far discussed relative to -ed deletion, I also analyzed statistically by means of the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program. First I measured the probability of /-t,d/ deletion vs. /ɨd/ deletion, and the nonapplications probabilities model of the computer program assigned a feature weight of 0.38 to /-t,d/ deletion vs. 0.0 for /ɨd/ deletion. The same program also showed no significant difference between -ed absence from past tense forms (probability = 0.03) and -ed absence from participles (probability = 0.0), though a second program in which I subdivided the participle category into embedded participles vs. nonembedded participles (e.g. "a instrument use for telling time" vs. "white Christianity was use against blacks") did show that the embedded participles were less likely to simplify than the other participles: the probability of embedded participles undergoing deletion was 0.0 vs. 0.10 for both past tense verbs and non-embedded participles.

I then ran a Cedergren/Sankoff program which measured the relative effects of both preceding and following phonetic environments. I divided the data into the following factor groups:

Group I: Accompanying Stress Factor

A = Accented syllable
U = Unaccented syllable

Group II: Preceding Phonetic Environment

W = Vowel
K = Consonant
R = r

Group III: Following Phonetic Environment

C = Consonant
V = Vowel
P = Pause

These factor groups provide for a possibility of 18 environments, 17 of which were filled. The applications model of the computer program was the better fit; it assigned the following weights to the various features: ($p_o = 0.32$)

A = 0.31; U = 0.0
W = 0.51; K = 0.0; R = 0.26
C = 0.0; V = 0.16; P = 0.17

Observed vs. expected frequencies were as follows:

($X^2 = 9.954$)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
AWC	28/38	29.22	AKC	117/221	116.80
UWC	4/5	3.33	UKC	14/46	14.62
AWV	19/21	16.94	AKV	62/108	65.39
UWV	3/5	3.60	UKV	12/21	9.02
AWP	2/4	3.24	AKP	28/42	25.62
UWP	1/1	0.72	UKP	4/13	5.66
ARC	18/26	16.88	ARV	12/18	12.71
URC	10/20	9.85	URV	8/16	9.20
ARP	5/6	4.26			

Accordingly, the program illustrates that the factor which restrains /-t,d/ deletion most is a preceding vowel and that the effect of a preceding r is almost exactly intermediate between the effect of a preceding vowel and a preceding consonant. Furthermore, the program indicates that being in a stressed syllable is also an important constraint on /-t,d/ deletion and that least important is the nature of the following phonetic environment: a following vowel or pause are nearly equal in their restraint on deletion; a following consonant favors deletion.

I ran a separate program on consonant cluster simplification alone; that is, I excluded from this analysis forms with a preceding vowel or preceding r. The factor groups which I set up were the following:

Group I: Accompanying Stress Factor

A = Accented syllable
U = Unaccented syllable

Group II: Preceding Consonant Type[12]

O = Obstruent (Stop)
F = Fricative (Sibilant)
S = Sonorant

Group III: Following Phonetic Environment

C = Consonant
V = Vowel
P = Pause

These factor groups provide for a possibility of 18 environments, 17 of which were filled. The applications

model of the computer program assigned the following weights to the various factors: (p_o = 0.238)

A = 0.31; U = 0.0
O = 0.15; F = 0.18; S = 0.0
C = 0.0; V = 0.14; P = 0.17

Observed vs. expected frequencies were: (X^2 = 11.11)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
AOC	24/44	24.30	UOC	1/2	0.70
AFC	58/103	58.53	UFC	10/25	9.37
ASC	29/56	26.52	USC	3/19	4.52
AOV	17/31	19.07	UOV	1/1	0.44
AFV	32/51	32.07	UFV	9/17	7.86
ASV	12/25	13.68	USV	2/3	1.03
AOP	3/3	1.88			
AFP	21/31	19.86	UFP	1/7	3.36
ASP	4/8	4.49	USP	3/6	2.19

Regarding the preceding stress factor and the following phonetic environment, these figures are consistent with the earlier analysis of all /-t,d/ deletion. Furthermore, the significance of a preceding sonorant in favoring deletion and the corresponding restraining influence of both stops and fricatives are apparent. The data does not, however, confirm Fasold's results, which showed fricatives being intermediate between stops and sonorants.

On the whole, these analyses of /-t,d/ deletion support previous studies of the variable. Several important confirmations are: 1) deletion is most favored when the deletable /-t,d/ is preceded by another consonant, especially a sonorant; 2) deletion is also favored when the syllable ending in the deletable /-t,d/ has weak stress; 3) deletion is favored when the deletable /-t,d/

is followed by another consonant; and 4) deletion of the /ɨd/ suffix also occurs, though at a much lower frequency than deletion of /t/ or /d/. Thus the data indicates that the same constraints are in operation on the writing style of the Dayton BEV informants as operate in the speech of previously analyzed BEV informants from other inner city areas.

Third singular s absence:

It is the unanimous decision of all linguists who have studied the use of the third singular s morpheme among speakers of the Black English Vernacular (e.g. Labov et al 1968, Wolfram 1969, Fasold 1972) that this feature is not a part of the grammar--that "there is no underlying s in the dialect." (Labov et al 1968:164) In my study of the writing of Dayton informants, I therefore expected to find that the percentage of third singular s absence would be quite high for a number of individuals. I did find that six individuals had more than 50% s absence, and 20 had more than 10% absence, but only one male never used the third singular s suffix. In the writing of all 42 informants there were 1128 third singular verbs;[13] 222 (19.7%) of these appeared without the s. Among the 25 individuals for whom s absence appears to be grammatical[14] the percentage of s absence was 30.8% (217 out of 705 third singular verbs).

Regarding the relationship of extra-linguistic factors with third singular s, there is little correlation. The socioeconomic status of the 25 individuals with s absence ranges widely; for 1960 the mean is 2.4, and for 1972 the mean is 2.64. The failure of this variable to correlate with socioeconomic status is therefore in contrast with previous BEV studies, for example Wolfram's, whose informants "are sharply stratified on the basis of the -Z third person singular." (1969:135)[15]

Mobility for the 25 Dayton informants was downward (mean = -0.6) but also near the expected norm for all 42 informants. Racial isolation indexes average 8.3, which is slightly, but not much, higher than the norm. Similarly, the mean ACT score was 9.2; this is the 6th percentile, which is also the norm for the entire Dayton group. Fourteen of the 25 individuals were female and eleven were male. The possible significance of this factor was tested by including sex as a factor group in the Cedergren/Sankoff computer analysis. (See the discussion on p. 87.)

In analyzing the variation between third singular s absence or presence, I have followed several procedures used by Fasold in his analysis of Washington, D. C. informants. For example, I tested Fasold's hypothesis that "present tense verbs with collective third person subjects would manifest significantly less s presence

TABLE III-2

The Relationship of Third Singular s Absence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
RR	100.0%	4/4	2	1	-4	9	M	5
PM	90.0	27/30	1	1	-2	8	F	6
EJ	85.7	24/28	3	3	-1	10	M	8
BD	83.3	30/36	4	3	-3	9	F	8
ED	76.9	10/13	4	4	-1	8	M	8
CB	54.3	25/46[16]	4	5	0	9	F	6
PD	50.0	5/10	3	2	-5	9	M	5
MB	33.3	14/42	3	1	-5	10	F	9
HJ	31.3	5/16	2	3	+1	9	F	14
DG	28.3	13/46	3	3	-2	8	M	--
CH	25.0	8/32	1	3	0	10	M	9
FJ	23.8	10/42	3	3	-1	9	M	8
CL	23.1	9/39	2	2	0	10	F	--
LJ	23.1	3/13	2	3	+3	5	F	13
PH	20.0	2/10	1	1	--	--	M	--
RE	18.8	6/32	2	1	+1	10	F	8
GD	18.2	2/11	2	4	+1	10	F	12
CM	16.7	4/24	2	3	-1	7	F	17
RW	16.7	2/12	4	5	+1	7	M	3
PJ	10.7	3/28	1	1	-3	8	F	10
DJ	8.0	4/50	3	3	+4	2	F	19
WM	6.9	2/29	3	3	-1	6	M	11
ME	5.7	3/53	1	3	+1	10	F	9
AD	5.3	1/19	2	2	-1	8	F	6
CR	2.5	1/40	2	3	+4	8	M	8

than verbs with noncollective subjects." (1972:128-129) Although I did find a number of examples of s absence with collective subjects (e.g. "the defense include three players"), like Fasold I found no significant difference in percentage between these verbs and those with other kinds of subjects.

I also examined conjoined verb phrases in an effort to determine whether what Fasold (1972:130) calls "a fatigue factor" might be at work. However, I found only a couple instances of conjoined verbs in which the first verb carried an s but the second did not (e.g. "Joyce has her ups and downs but take things slowly"); the majority of verbs in conjoined phrases were both marked with an s, and contrary to Fasold's findings (1972:130), I also found several conjoined phrases where the first verb carried no s but the second did (e.g. "Everybody just stay out in the hall and jives around"). Conjoined verbs therefore did not prove to be a factor related to s absence.

Still another possibility I examined was whether an auxiliary verb was more or less likely to occur without the s than a main verb. The only verbs involved in this kind of alternation were have and do. There were 87 instances of have/has as an auxiliary; 15 of these (17.3%) were realized as have; e.g. "a man who have died." There were 72 examples of have/has as a

main verb; 12 of which (16.7%) were realized as have; e.g. "when a teacher have you kick out of school." Thus, the difference in percentage between auxiliary and main verb have is not significant. The figures on do are 7 out of 31 auxiliary verbs = do (22.6%); e.g. "what do freedom mean," and 1 out of 6 main verbs = do (16.7%); e.g. "all she do is go to school." Again the difference is not statistically significant. Therefore, my findings agree with Fasold's that there is no significant difference in s absence when the verb is an auxiliary or a main verb.[17] (1972:123-124)

The difference between s absence after voiceless vs. voiced sounds (that is, /s/ absence vs. /z/ absence) also did not prove to be significant. There were 161 verbs whose base ended in a voiceless nonstrident consonant;[18] 57 of these (35.4%) appeared without the s. By comparison, there were 183 verbs whose base ended in a voiced nonstrident consonant, and 66 of these (36.1%) were written without the s suffix. Furthermore, adding all other verbs with bases ending in voiced sounds (that is, vowels) to the voiced nonstrident consonants does not significantly affect the relationship between /s/ absence and /z/ absence. The total number of voiced verb bases was 316, 108 (34.2%) of which were written without the s suffix.

On the other hand, when the verb base ended in a

strident consonant (that is, when the s represents /ɨz/), there was a much lower percentage of s absence than in either of the other two environments. There were 33 such verbs, only 6 of which (18.2%) appeared without the s suffix. This finding is in contrast with results reported by Fasold (1972:125), who states that the /ɨz/ form was absent slightly more often than the other two pronunciations, but certainly not significantly so." The significance of this factor for my data I therefore examined by including "sibilant" as a factor in the Cedergren/Sankoff analysis explained below.

I also investigated the hypothesis that it is the most common words in the language (those learned first and used most frequently) which are most subject to s absence in BEV. For I had noticed that certain vocabulary items appeared with a very high frequency of s absence; e.g. come, 9 out of 16 instances; help, 6 out of 7 instances; make, 8 out of 16 instances; take, 7 out of 13 instances; tell, 7 out of 12 instances; and try, 5 out of 7 instances. I found, however, that there were more high frequency words that were used with the s than without it. Among 348 instances of 74 high frequency verbs[19] (excluding for the moment have and do), there were 130 (37.4%) which were used without the s suffix. Therefore, the hypothesis that the most common

words are most likely to be used without the s did not prove to be true.

In fact, the opposite appears to be true for the two most frequent verbs in my data--have and do. Both of these verbs disfavor the absence of s. There were 159 occurrences of have/has, but only 27 of these (17%) were realized as have. Similarly, there were 37 instances of do/does, of which 8 (21.6%) were realized as do. Don't, however, is in sharp contrast with do. The percentage of third singular don't was 42.9% (12 out of 28 instances), nearly twice the percentage of third singular do.

The relationships between these verbs and all others are in agreement with the findings reported by Fasold on the Washington, D. C. informants:[20]

Comparison of the absence of third person singular present tense -s with have and with regular verbs

(Fasold 1972:123 Table 23)

	Have	Regular Verbs[21]
Present	16	195
Absent	18	363
Percent absent	52.9	65.1
Dayton informants:		
Present	132	481
Absent	27	170
Percent absent	17.0	26.1

Washington, D. C. informants:

Comparison of the absence of third person singular present tense -s with negative do forms and with regular verbs

Fasold 1972:124
Table 24)

	Don't/Doesn't	Regular Verbs
Present	4	195
Absent	24	363
Percent absent	87.5	65.1

Dayton informants:

Present	16	481
Absent	12	170
Percent absent	42.9	26.1

I ran several Cedergren/Sankoff computer program analyses on third singular s. On the first of these I examined the relationship between have, do, don't, and other regular verbs. On this run I also measured the effect of auxiliary vs. main verbs and the effect of sex (whether the writer was female or male). Factor groups which I selected were as follows:

Group I: Verb Type

H = Have
D = Do
N = Don't
O = Other verbs

Group II: Verb function

A = Auxiliary[22]
M = Main verb

Group III: Sex of writer

F = Female
X = Male

These factor groups provide a possible 16 environments, 12 of which were filled. (Four were not because don't/ doesn't cannot function as a main verb, and other verbs cannot function as auxiliaries.) The nonapplications probabilities model of the computer program assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($p_o = 0.15$)

H = 0.0; D = 0.05; N = 0.31; O = 0.23
A = 0.02; M = 0.0
F = 0.03; X = 0.0

The observed vs. expected frequencies of the 12 environments were as follows: ($X^2 = 2.09$)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
HAF	10/55	10.11	DAF	5/18	4.03
HAX	5/32	5.12	DAX	2/13	2.62
HMF	9/54	9.23	DMF	1/3	0.64
HMX	3/18	2.64	DMX	0/3	0.57
NAF	6/16	6.99	OMF	105/293	105.77
NAX	6/12	5.05	OMX	65/188	64.37

These figures statistically illustrate the relationships of the two verbs have and do with other verbs. They show that there was no significant difference between have and do themselves, but that both verbs were much less likely to occur without the s suffix than were other verbs. The frequencies also show that don't

acted entirely differently from do, that in fact don't was the most favored form without an s to occur with a third singular subject. Furthermore, these figures confirm the lack of significant difference between auxiliary and main verbs and the lack of significance of sex as a factor in the use of third singular s.

Regarding the effect of phonological factors on the absence of third singular s, Labov, Wolfram, and Fasold have all reported finding no "patterned hierarchy between preceding and following environments." (Fasold 1972:127) Yet my own data indicated that phonological factors did have some significance, that at least one phonological factor--a preceding sibilant--disfavored s absence. And although I had observed no evidence of a difference between preceding voiceless and voiced consonants, my figures did suggest that a preceding non-strident consonant favored s absence somewhat more than a preceding vowel (36.3% absence vs. 32.9% absence). I therefore undertook further computer analyses in order to examine possible phonological constraints on the use of third singular s.

For one analysis I divided the data into the following factor groups:

Group I: Preceding Phonological Environment

C = Non-strident consonant[23]
V = Vowel
S = Sibilant

Group II: Following Phonological Environment

K = Consonant (other than a glide)
W = Vowel
G = Glide (i.e. /w/, /y/, and /h/)
P = Pause[24]

These factors allow for a possibility of 12 environments, all of which were filled. The non-applications probabilities model of the computer program assigned the following weights to these factors: ($p_o = 0.13$)

C = 0.23; V = 0.17; S = 0.0
K = 0.04; W = 0.0; G = 0.24; P = 0.24

Observed vs. expected frequencies were the following: ($X^2 = 6.92$)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
CK	67/190	66.23	VK	10/34	10.11
CW	37/113	36.71	VW	6/24	6.52
CG	21/42	20.39	VG	7/14	6.23
CP	7/19	9.19	VP	2/4	1.77
SK	3/21	3.31			
SW	1/7	0.89			
SG	0/3	1.00			
SP	2/2	0.66			

These figures do show a difference between the effect of a preceding consonant and a preceding vowel and illustrate statistically the restraining influence of preceding sibilants. However, the results for the following phonological environments are most surprising; although the difference between [+ consonantal] segments and vowels is negligible, both a following glide and a pause favor *s* absence; e.g. "he give you a smart answer" and "everybody have to do what he say." In percentages *s* absence occurs with a following glide 47.5% of the

time and with a pause 44% of the time. The absence of the s before a pause could be related to a general tendency to lower pitch and intensity at the end of a segment, but the only tentative explanation I can offer for the high percentage of s absence before a glide is that a large number of the verbs in this environment were written by individuals with overall percentages of s absence which were very high. For example, of the 21 verbs without s in the CG environment, 17 were written by individuals whose overall s absence percentages were more than 50%. Thus I am suggesting that it is quite accidental that this pre-glide position co-occurred with so many verbs lacking the s suffix.

In the long run, I was more distrustful of the apparent difference indicated for a preceding consonant and a preceding vowel. For my results here were in contradiction with both Wolfram's in Detroit and Fasold's in Washington, D. C. Fasold reports for both studies the following percentages of s absence in the pre-consonantal environment:

(Fasold 1972:128
Table 27)

	C__##C	V__##C
Detroit	62.4%	72.2%
Washington	65.5%	72.9%

These relationships were reversed for the Dayton informants

as follows:

	C__##C	V__##C
Dayton	35.5%	25.4%

I then decided to break the category "consonant" down, first separating out preceding _r_, and after _r_ proved to be significant but the relationship between consonants and vowels remained the same, breaking "consonant" down further by separating the other coronal sonorants (i.e. _l_ and _n_) from this group.

Thus I discovered that a preceding _r_ favored _s_ absence more than other consonants; e.g. "if the president of the university care about the students." The percentage of _s_ absence after _r_ proved to be 45% (9 out of 20 instances); the non-applications probabilities model assigned the following probabilities: R = 0.32; C = 0.21; V = 0.13; S = 0.0.

More significantly, I discovered that when the other coronal sonorants or sonorant clusters[25] (e.g. -_nd_ in "it stand to see" and -_l_ in "how living your life feel like") were included in the same category with preceding _r_ and _r_ clusters, the probability of the resulting category "sonorant" favoring _s_ absence was almost exactly the same as for _r_ alone: 0.31. The actual percentage of _s_ absence after coronal sonorants was 42.7% (70 out of 164 occurrences). And as a consequence of this division of the preceding environments into "sibilants,"

"sonorants," "other consonants" and "vowels," the difference between preceding consonants and preceding vowels which had been apparent in earlier analyses was now negligible; probabilities were now, for consonants other than coronal sonorants 0.15, and for vowels 0.13.

Thus I conclude that in the writing of the Dayton informants, s absence was in part conditioned by phonological constraints: Besides being favored heavily in -sC clusters (e.g. "consist" and "ask") and conversely inhibited by a preceding sibilant (e.g. "possesses"), s absence was apparently favored by a following glide or pause and also significantly favored by a preceding coronal sonorant.

Possessive 's absence:

In their discussion of the absence of possessive 's among Black speakers in New York City, Labov et al (1968:169) come to the conclusion that on the whole "NNE speakers do not use 's." Though remarking on a scarcity of sufficient data, they conclude that the absence of 's is similar to the absence of third singular s: "well over 50% of the time we find no final 's." (1968:169)

Wolfram also has studied this feature with somewhat contradictory results, finding "sharp stratification" between middle class and working class speakers, and

"only isolated instances" of possessive 's absence among lower middle class Blacks (1969:141), but also a "relatively low frequency" of possessive 's absence among most working class informants. (1969:142) Wolfram further comments, however, that for several informants the 's was "more frequently absent than present." (1969:142) This seems also to be the situation for the Dayton informants: for some informants the feature is almost always absent; for a number of others its absence is significant though less than 50%, but for well over half of the informants there is no evidence of possessive 's absence.

The situation is complicated by the fact that, as Labov et al noted, the data is scarce. Five of the Dayton informants had no potential occurrences of possessive 's, and a number of others had only one or two potential occurrences.[26] There were a total of 49 examples of noun possessives without 's out of a possible 220 (22.3%). The mean percentage among the 17 informants who wrote at least one possessive without 's was 39.8%

The feature does not show correlation with social status; means are near the norm: 2.47 in 1960 and 2.65 in 1972. Included among the 17 informants without 's are individuals from the highest status levels. For example, CB, at level 4 in 1960 and level 5 in 1972,

TABLE III-3

The Relationship of Possessive 's Absence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	100.0%	10/10	3	3	-1	10	M	8
LJ	100.0	1/1	2	3	+3	5	F	13
FJ	85.7	6/7	3	3	-1	9	M	8
CB	85.7	6/7	4	5	0	9	F	6
ME	83.3	5/6	1	3	+1	10	F	9
BD	66.7	2/3	4	3	-3	9	F	8
DG	50.0	1/2	3	3	-2	8	M	--
PD	50.0	2/4	3	2	-5	9	M	5
DJ	44.4	4/9	3	3	+4	2	F	19
CL	33.3	3/9	2	2	0	10	F	--
ED	33.3	1/3	4	4	-1	8	M	8
RR	33.3	1/3	2	1	-4	9	M	5
PM	25.0	1/4	1	1	-2	8	F	6
CM	15.4	2/13	2	3	-1	7	F	17
HA	14.3	1/7	1	2	-1	10	F	6
CH	12.5	1/8	1	3	0	10	M	9
MB	7.4	2/27	3	1	-5	10	F	9

had 85.7% 's absence, and ED, at level 4 in both 1960 and 1972, had 33.3% 's absence. There were also a number of informants from the lowest status levels. For example, ME, at level 1 in 1960 and level 3 in 1972, had 83.3% deletion, and PD, at level 3 in 1960 and level 2 in 1972, had 50% deletion. Mobility indexes ranged also from the lowest level (-5) to the highest level (+4). Most of the informants (11 of the 17) were downwardly mobile, however. The mean was -1.1.

Neither does the absence of 's show strong correlation with racial isolation. Racial isolation indexes ranged from one end of the scale (2) to the other (10), and the mean for the 17 (8.4) is only slightly above the norm for the entire Dayton group. Likewise ACT scores ranged from the highest score of 19 to a low of 5. Most of the informants, however, had low scores; the mean was 9.1.

Sex does appear to be a factor in the absence of 's. Although there are more females than males among the 17 with 's absence (10 vs. 7), the mean percentage of these females was 31.4%, and the mean percentage of the seven males was 59.5%. The overall totals of males and females are similarly opposed. The mean percentage of 's absence among all females was 19.4%; the mean percentage for all males was 27.2%.

In conclusion, the absence of possessive 's appears to be a significant feature in one respect because of its relatively high percentage of occurrence, but less significant in another respect because the number of potential occurrences of possessive 's is relatively few.

Noun plural s absence:

The absence of the noun plural suffix s has often been mentioned by those investigating the Black English Vernacular but is generally dismissed as a feature of little significance. For example, Labov et al state that "the NNE [Negro Nonstandard English] plural is quite intact"; and that there is only a "small amount of disturbance in the plural," much of which is attributable to "a few individual speakers who show much less regularity in plural inflections than the norm for NNE." (1968:163) Not surprisingly, then, no intensive or systematic analysis has yet been made of noun plural s absence though Carolyn Kessler has written a brief discussion of it (included in Fasold 1972:223-231),[27] and Wolfram did also include it as one of the variables he studied in Detroit. His treatment of the plural suffix is cursory, however, in view of the fact that he found it to be an insignificant feature--its absence "much less frequent than -Z third person singular and

-Z possessive." (1969:151)

Labov, Wolfram, and Kessler have all suggested several possible linguistic constraints on the absence of noun plural s, and both Wolfram and Kessler present data which indicates that the absence of the plural suffix, though relatively infrequent, correlates with several extra-linguistic factors, namely socioeconomic class, age, and sex.

In my study of the writing of Dayton informants the absence of the noun plural suffix s does seem to be significant, both regarding its percentage of occurrence and the number of people involved in using the variant. In fact, the rather high percentage of noun plural absence which I have observed in these writing samples is consistent with findings by Wolfram and Whiteman in the writing of tenth grade Black students in Prince George's County, Maryland. They found that among those informants[28] who deleted the s the percentage of plural absence was quite high: "44% of all plural constructions." (1971:36)

Among all 42 Dayton individuals, there were 3683 potential occurrences of the noun plural suffix s; 403 of these (10.9%) occurred without an s.[29] There were, however, 14 individuals who never deleted the s and 13 more who had 5% or less s absence. I have therefore excluded these 27 from my intensive analysis of

constraints on s absence because it is not likely that an analysis including such low percentages of variation as 1.4 and 0.8 or of course the lack of any variation would lead to any real understanding of what causes the variation.

Among the 15 remaining individuals (7 females and 8 males) who had 9% or greater s absence there were 382 forms without an s out of a potential 1330 (a mean of 28.7% s absence). The variable does not show correlation for these informants with socioeconomic status; the mean status level for the 15 for 1960 is 2.47; for 1972 it is 2.73. Likewise, mobility is near the norm: -0.7. So is racial isolation; the mean racial isolation index is 8.2. Similarly ACT scores reflect the norm for the entire group; the mean standard score is 9.1 (the 6th percentile).

Sex, however, does appear to correlate with s plural absence. Among the 7 females there were 249 forms without the s out of a potential 790 (31.5%), whereas among the 8 males there were 133 forms without s out of a potential 540 (24.6%). In view of this difference and also considering Wolfram's finding to the contrary that "males show a higher incidence [of s absence] than females" (1969:148), I included sex as a factor in the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis of the noun plural suffix, which I discuss below.

TABLE III-4

The Relationship of Noun Plural s Absence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
HJ	59.6%	28/47	2	3	+1	9	F	14
PM	47.3	70/148	1	1	-2	8	F	6
PD	44.3	27/61	3	2	-5	9	M	5
BD	41.9	67/160	4	3	-3	9	F	8
RR	40.0	12/30	2	1	-4	9	M	5
CB	36.2	38/105	4	5	0	9	F	6
FJ	28.7	29/101	3	3	-1	9	M	8
EJ	24.6	17/69	3	3	-1	10	M	8
ED	23.6	13/55	4	4	-1	8	M	8
CH	20.6	20/97	1	3	0	10	M	9
ME	16.7	22/132	1	3	+1	10	F	9
PH	13.2	7/53	1	1	--	--	M	--
DJ	13.1	19/145	3	3	+4	2	F	19
DG	10.8	8/74	3	3	-2	8	M	--
LJ	9.4	5/53	2	3	+3	5	F	13

I investigated several possible linguistic constraints on s absence. One which Kessler suggests is important has to do with voicing; that is, whether the suffix represents /z/ or /s/.[30] She presents the following percentages for UM (upper middle class), LM (lower middle class), UW (upper working class), and LW (lower working

class) informants:

(Kessler 1972:233)

	Potential	/z/ absence	/s/ absence
UM	N = 137	2.1	0.0
LM	N = 150	4.0	1.3
UW	N = 118	16.1	3.3
LW	N = 97	18.5	2.2

These figures indicate both class stratification and a distinct difference between /z/ absence and /s/ absence. My own data however indicates no significant difference between /z/ absence and /s/ absence; among the 15 Dayton informants with 9% or more s absence, there was 28.1% (59 out of 210 potential occurrences) /s/ deletion and 29.0% (291 out of 1003) /z/ deletion--a difference of less than one percent.

I suspect that the reason for this lack of correspondence between Kessler's results and my own is due to the fact that Kessler's figures apparently do not represent the same kind of percentages as mine. For example, her 18.5% /z/ absence among the lower working class speakers does not apparently represent a percent of /z/ absence based solely on the total number of potential /z/ occurrences, but a percent of /z/ absence based on the total number of potential /z/ + potential /s/ + potential /iz/ occurrences. Similarly, her 2.2%

/s/ absence for the lower working class does not represent /s/ absence based solely on a total number of potential /s/ occurrences, but again /s/ absence based on the total number of potential /z/ + /s/ + /ɨz/ occurrences. The conclusion which Kessler draws then that "the most frequently absent variant is /z/" (1972:233) is therefore true only because, as I have found, /z/ is a more common allomorph; that is, there are more potential /z/'s than potential /s/'s in actual use. My data, for instance shows that potential /z/ occurs nearly five times as often as potential /s/--1003 vs. 210 occurrences. Therefore, given approximately the same rate of plural absence, there result nearly five times as many examples of /z/ absence as /s/ absence--291 vs. 59. Voicing, I conclude, is therefore not a factor in noun plural s absence.

On the other hand, there is no denying that /ɨz/ absence is less frequent than either /z/ or /s/ absence. It occurred among my 15 informants less than half as frequently as /z/ or /s/ absence--10.6% of the time (10 out of a potential 94 occurrences) vs. 28.9% (351 out of 1213 occurrences) /z/ + /s/ absence.[31] I included among my Cedergren/Sankoff analyses a program to illustrate this difference, and according to the applications model of the program, the factor which results in the /ɨz/ allomorph (i.e. a preceding sibilant) had

a probability of 0.64 of restraining s absence vs. 0.0 for all other preceding phonetic environments.

Another linguistic constraint which has often been cited by investigators of BEV (e.g. Baratz 1969: 98) is the significance of a preceding plural quantifier on noun plural s absence. Wolfram investigated it to some extent in Detroit to find that for "nouns co-occurring with numerical quantifiers, -Z absence was 10.8 percent" vs. 6.2 percent for those occurring with non-numerical quantifiers. (1969:145)

In my own study I investigated this constraint slightly differently by first subdividing prenominal modifiers into three groups: a) those including a plural quantifier; e.g. "a bunch of dogs," "35-50 pound," and "one of my sister"; b) those with a zero determiner but no plural quantifier; e.g. "there are parks, movie, night club"; and c) those with either the definite article or a possessive or some other non-plural determiner, such as "no" or "any"; e.g. "my parents," "the student," and "any outside comments." I found no significant difference between s absence after a) or b) although I did find a significantly lower percentage of s absence after c), as shown below:

	% absence	#/Total
a)	31.4	95/303
b)	31.6	168/531
c)	20.6	78/379

I therefore included "type of determiner" as a factor group in the several Cedergren/Sankoff analyses which I ran, but I conflated categories a) and b) into one plural determiner factor (P), which represents both explicit and implicit plural quantifiers, distinct from a non-plural determiner(0).[32]

I also investigated several other constraints. I examined the effect of the varying preceding phonological environments on the absence of s. I did this by first modifying Kessler's division of the preceding environment (she distinguishes only two--consonant and vowel), establishing a third category for liquids. Then, following Wolfram's suggestion that "there is a . . . phonological constraint (viz. /n/) which accounts for some -Z plural absence" (1969:152), I further subdivided the pre-consonantal factor group, separating out /n/ from the other consonants. I also examined the possible effect of the following phonetic environment on s absence--whether consonant, vowel, or pause. For the computer analysis I therefore used the following factor groups:

Group I: Sex of writer

M = Male
F = Female

Group II: Type of Determiner

P = Plural determiner
0 = Other (non-plural determiner)

Group III: Preceding Phonological Environment

V = Vowel
L = Liquid
N = n(C)[33]
C = Other consonant

Group IV: Following Phonological Environment

K = Consonant
X = Pause
W = Vowel

These factors allow for a possibility of 48 environments, all of which were filled. The applications model of the computer program assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($X^2 = 26.48$) ($p_o = 0.54$)[34]

M = 0.19; F = 0.0
P = 0.0; O = 0.39
V = 0.37; L = 0.15; N = 0.0; C = 0.24
K = 0.0; X = 0.29; W = 0.02

This program indicates the importance of sex as a non-linguistic factor in s plural absence; it also statistically illustrates the difference between nouns following plural determiners and those following non-plural determiners--a result which confirms both Wolfram's and Kessler's findings "that non-numerical quantifiers tend to disfavor plural absence." (Kessler 1972:232)

Regarding the effect of the preceding phonological environment, a preceding vowel inhibits s absence more than consonants of any kind or liquids. This result is also consistent with Kessler's finding "that a preceding vowel inhibits deletion more than a preceding consonant." (1972:235) What is particularly puzzling,

however, is the apparent effect of the various following phonological environments. The program does not indicate any significant difference between the effect of a following vowel or consonant, but a following pause is seen to restrain s absence considerably. This latter finding is suspect, however, and should be viewed with a healthy scepticism, remembering for one thing that "pause" as I have defined it for this study refers to terminal pause only and obviously cannot accurately reflect all pre-pausal occurrences. In addition, the probabilities for this computer run are suspect because there is a particularly high chi square (7.80) for one environment, FONX (= female informants, non-plural determiner, preceding n, following pause). Therefore I reran the program eliminating the following environment as a factor group with the following results: There were 16 potential environments, all of which were filled. The applications model of the computer program assigned the following weights to the various features: ($X^2 = 6.83$) ($p_o = 0.57$)

M = 0.20; F = 0.0
P = 0.0; O = 0.39
V = 0.38; L = 0.14; N = 0.0; C = 0.23

The results obtained are particularly satisfying: the probabilities for all factors are very similar or are identical to those obtained on the previous computer run, yet the chi squares (both total and individual and

on both the applications model and the non-applications model) are low; furthermore, the linguistic findings confirm results of earlier studies.[35]

One factor which this analysis does not consider, however, is the element of stress. My calculations indicated that stress was a factor of some importance. The total occurrence of s absence in stressed syllables was 151 out of a potential 634 (23.8%) vs. s absence in unstressed syllables of 34.6% (197 out of 569 occurrences).[36] Furthermore, I found that in every environment s absence was more likely to occur in an unstressed than a stressed syllable, as the following table illustrates:

	% absence (Accented)	% absence (Unaccented)
C	26.1% (98/376)	29.7% (22/74)
N	30.3% (23/76)	36.0% (82/228)
L	16.8% (18/107)	36.3% (77/212)
V	16.0% (12/75)	29.1% (16/55)

I therefore ran another computer analysis including stress as a factor group (where A = accented and U = unaccented). The program allowed a possibility of 32 environments, all of which were filled. The applications model assigned the following feature weights to the various features: (X^2 = 21.04) (p_o = 0.53)

M = 0.20; F = 0.0
A = 0.31; U = 0.0
P = 0.0; O = 0.39
V = 0.30; L = 0.12; N = 0.0; C = 0.06

The effect of stress is immediately apparent; A is a significant restraint on s absence. The relationships between factors M and F and between factors P and O are almost exactly the same as on the previous computer run. Factors N, L, and V also do not change significantly in their relationships to one another. However, there is a great deal of difference between the weight assigned to C on this program and that assigned to C in the previous program, and the difference between the effect of other consonants and the effect of n has been nullified.

The problem now is to decide which analysis is the better one or whether still another analysis is preferable to both. I looked again at the table on the preceding page,[37] representing the statistical relationship between the various preceding phonological environments in accented vs. unaccented syllables. It became clear on this second look that the difference between stressed syllables and unstressed syllables was not very great when a consonant preceded the potential s, even when this consonant was an n. The environments which did reflect a significant difference regarding stress were those where either a vowel or a liquid preceded the potential s; in other words, those environments marked [+ vocalic].[38]

For the final run on the variable I therefore divided the preceding environment in the following way:

A = accented [+ vocalic] segment
U = unaccented [+ vocalic] segment
N = n(C)
C = other [- vocalic] segment

Again there were 16 potential environments, all of which were filled. The applications model of the computer program assigned the following weights to the eight features: (p_o = 0.57)

M = 0.19; F = 0.0
P = 0.0; O = 0.38
A = 0.52; U = 0.01; C = 0.23; N = 0.0

Observed vs. expected frequencies were as follows: (X^2 = 5.35)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
MPC	117/157	115.32	FPC	116/175	117.66
MOC	48/58	48.39	FOC	53/66	52.51
MPN	59/90	58.81	FPN	64/106	60.67
MON	22/27	21.16	FON	57/85	62.32
MPA	41/48	39.93	FPA	52/67	53.09
MOA	22/25	22.38	FOA	37/42	36.56
MPU	42/70	46.05	FPU	70/121	69.90
MOU	26/31	24.38	FOU	36/45	33.14

I conclude that regarding the extra-linguistic factor sex, the males in my sample were significantly less likely to write noun plurals without s than females; regarding the grammatical constraint of the type of determiner preceding the noun plural, those determiners not marked plural (such as the, my, no, any) were significantly less likely to accompany s absence than those marked plural (either explicitly, e.g. after many or ten, or implicitly, i.e. by means of the zero determiner);

regarding the phonological environment immediately preceding the potential s suffix, the factor most likely to inhibit s absence was a preceding accented [+ vocalic] segment (either a vowel, l or r); a [+ consonantal] segment, which was not n or an nC cluster also significantly inhibited s absence; on the other hand, unaccented [+ vocalic] segments, preceding n's, and plural determiners are all linguistic factors which favored s absence.

The noun plural suffix thus proved to be a variable of considerable significance in the writing of the Dayton informants, and the constraints upon its absence involved both phonological and grammatical factors as well as the extra-linguistic factor of sex.

Adverbial s absence:

The absence of the s suffix from "a select subset of adverbs" (Wolfram 1969:56) has received little attention from investigators of BEV.[39] Perhaps this is because there are not many of these adverbs and they do not occur very frequently. Certainly this is true for the Dayton informants; there were only two such adverbs which were at all common in the writing; one of these words was sometime(s) and the other was alway(s).

Yet it is also true for the Dayton informants that

the percentage of s absence for both of these words, and particularly sometime, was quite high. Among all the informants there were 13 occurrences of sometime out of a possible 52 (25%), and likewise there were 13 examples of alway out of a potential 115 (11.3%). Most of the 42 informants used only the forms ending in s. However, the data for the majority of individuals on these items was scarce--fewer than five tokens apiece. It is therefore unsound to say they never use the forms without s.

Ten people were involved in writing the forms without final s. Three of them (PM, RR, and ED) wrote forms without s exclusively, but the data is too limited to say that s deletion for them is a categorical rule. There is evidence that some individuals use one form without s but not the other; for example, BD, who wrote sometime regularly (5 out of 6 times), but never wrote alway (0 out of 4 times). As Labov suggests, this may be because "for some lexical items the s is a part of the underlying form and for others it is not." (1968:171)

The absence of adverbial s does not show strong correlation with socioeconomic status. The ten individuals were from all status levels except the highest; the mean was 2.7 in 1960 and 2.7 in 1972. Their mobility was generally downward; the mean was -1.1, but two females were upwardly mobile (ME and LJ). The racial isolation

indexes of all but one informant were high; the mean was 8.5; conversely, ACT scores were low (the mean was 8.0) except for the one female who was the most upwardly mobile. The item may be significant with respect to sex. The mean percentage of s absence among the four males was 64.7% (11 out of 17 instances), whereas the percentage of absence among the 6 females was 40.5% (15 out of 37 occurrences). Means based upon so few people are not reliable, however, and a conclusion that males are more likely to delete the adverbial suffix is particularly inconsistent with the apparent relationship of this variable with the noun plural suffix.

TABLE III-5

The Relationship of Adverbial s Absence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
PM	100.0%	2/2	1	1	-2	8	F	6
RR	100.0	2/2	2	1	-4	9	M	5
ED	100.0	1/1	4	4	-1	8	M	8
CB	66.7	4/6	4	5	0	9	F	6
EJ	66.7	4/6	3	3	-1	10	M	8
BD	50.0	5/10	4	3	-3	9	F	8
LJ	50.0	2/4	2	3	+3	5	F	13
FJ	50.0	4/8	3	3	-1	9	M	8
BT	25.0	1/4	3	1	-3	8	F	9
ME	9.1	1/11	1	3	+1	10	F	9

For it is a fact that the absence of the adverbial s was characteristic of the same individuals (with one exception BT, for whom all data is quite limited) who also wrote noun plurals without s.[40] This fact suggests that the same constraints operate on adverbial s deletion as operate on noun plural s absence. For example, the fact that sometime minus the s is more common than alway is probably related to the fact that in sometime the potential s is preceded by a consonant, whereas in alway the potential s is preceded by an accented vowel.

There is no doubt that the absence of the adverbial s suffix is a feature of the Dayton BEV. Its significance is simply limited by the fact that such adverbs are relatively infrequent in writing.

Copula deletion:

One of the features of the Black Vernacular to which linguists have given their widest attention is the deletion of the copula. The most definitive and up-to-date treatment of this phenomenon is by William Labov, "Contraction and Deletion of the Copula" (1972a:65-129). Labov's findings suggest a number of expectations for others studying the copula:

Expectation 1: Pronoun subjects favor both contraction and deletion far more than other noun-phrase

subjects. (1972a:84-85) In fact, contraction plus deletion after pronoun subjects can be expected to occur between 95 and 100% of the time, and deletion alone at least 50% of the time.[41]

Expectation 2: Regarding the various syntactic environments following the copula, the least contraction and deletion takes place before a noun phrase; more takes place before a predicate adjective or locative; more still takes place before a verb + ing, and the most takes place before "the future form gon or gonna." (1972a:87)

Expectation 3: Regarding the phonological environment immediately preceding the copula, a preceding vowel favors contraction, and a preceding consonant favors deletion. (1972a:105)

Expectation 4: The deletion of are is more common than the deletion of is. (1972a:52,120)

Expectation 5: Contraction of am is very frequent--categorical or semi-categorical, occurring more than 95% of the time--but deletion of am is very rare--less than 1% of the time. (1972a:98,70)

Expectation 6: The past copula is rarely deleted. (1972a:70)

Comparing the results of my study of the writing of Dayton informants with these expectations, I have

found the following:[42]

1) Pronoun subjects did favor deletion of the copula far more than noun subjects. There were in fact only two instances of a deleted copula after a noun subject in all my data:[43] "Project Cure mainly for rehabilitation" and "My brother didn't take what the teacher dishing out." Contractions after noun subjects were also extremely rare--no more than half a dozen examples; e.g. "Mama, Daddy's dead." On the other hand, there were 76 instances of deleted copula after pronoun subjects plus 6 which followed expletive <u>there</u>;[44] e.g. "she going to cook it," "if you lucky," and "their a professor here that don't like blacks." It is these instances which form the basis for the computer runs which I have made, using the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program.

2) Contrary to expected results, I found that a following verb + <u>ing</u> (e.g. "he is failing in college") was the most heavy restraint <u>against</u> contraction (Cedergren/Sankoff applications model probability = 0.21).[45] A following noun (e.g. "he is my student teacher") also slightly restrained contraction (probability 0.10), but predicate adjectives and locatives (e.g. "he's from Kentucky") slightly favored contraction.[46] Deletion, on the other hand, was favored most by a following noun, as in "it a shame" (non-applications model probability

0.22) and also somewhat by a following verb, as in "I doing my work" (probability 0.16), but not by a following predicate adjective; e.g. "it's just to bad, baby."

3) Regarding the phonological environments preceding the copula, I did not of course weigh vowels against consonants for NP subjects since these were almost all full forms. I did measure the effect of a preceding vowel or consonant when the subject was a pronoun (e.g. _he_ vs. _it_). I found no significant difference between the effect of a preceding vowel or consonant on contraction of all copulas taken together; I found, however, that a preceding vowel (e.g. "she is tall") somewhat inhibited contraction in the case of _is_ alone (applications model probability 0.13). And again contrary to expected results, I found that a preceding vowel favored deletion most: non-applications model probabilities = 0.48 (all copulas), 0.62 (_is_ alone).

4) _Are_ deletion was less common than _is_ deletion. By Labov's formula the percentages were for _are_ 46.7% (7 out of 15 instances), for _is_ 57.8% (52 out of 90 instances).

5) Contraction of _am_ occurred only 39.8% of the time (33 out of 83 instances), which is far from semi-categorical. This was not as high as the contraction of _is_ (42.5%; 90 out of 212 instances), but higher

than the percentage of contraction for _are_ (21.1%; 15 out of 71 instances). Most unexpected, however, was the high percentage of _am_ deletion; by Labov's formula 51.5% (17 out of 33 cases).

6) Deletion of the past copula was indeed rare. There were only 8 unambiguous instances out of nearly a thousand potential cases; 5 of these were written by one informant (BD). (See pp. 127-129 for further discussion of this feature.)

It is plain to see that these findings of mine are for the most part contradictions of the previously stated expectations. In only two respects do my findings coincide with those expectations: with the expectation that pronoun subjects will favor contraction and deletion more than noun-phrase subjects, and with the expectation that past copula deletion will be rare. That percentages for the Dayton group are different is not unexpected, particularly considering the fact that it is their writing I am analyzing not their speaking, but that relationships between forms and environments are so different is puzzling. The question is whether my seemingly contradictory findings can be explained.

In furthering my analysis of the data on the copula, I decided to use another formula than Labov's to determine the percentage of copula deletion; I simply divided the number of observed deletions by the number of full plus contracted plus deleted forms. In using this formula

I am suggesting that the written full form after a pronoun subject, for example _am_, or as it frequently appeared _'am_, actually represents the form [m][47] in the "phonetic stream of consciousness" or "subconsciousness" of the writer. With this idea in mind--that after pronoun subjects the full written form very likely represents a mental contraction--I will report on my other findings and particularly the results of the several computer runs I made using the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program.

The total number of present copula deletions for all 42 informants was 83: 56 of these represent _is_ deletion; 7 represent _are_ deletion, and 17 are _am_ deletions; three others were ambiguous.[48] The potential occurrences for deleted _are_ and _am_ are relatively simple to determine. For _is_ the problem is somewhat more complex. I have followed quite conservatively[49] the general principle set forth by Labov that "wherever SE (Standard English) can contract, BEV can delete." (1972:73) In fact, I have allowed as potential occurrences of the zero copula only the following:

1) For _are_ and _am_, only those instances where the verb stands immediately after its pronoun subject and not in clause-final position. Thus, I have counted, as potentially deletable, examples like "we are on our way" and "I am the third one" but not "the teachers here

are something else" or "I . . . will not go anywhere without her knowing where I am."[50]

2) For is, only those sentences where the verb stands immediately after its noun or pronoun[51] subject or after the dummy subject there or an interrogative adverb (e.g. how or why).[52] Thus, I included as examples of potentially deletable is "a person is lonely," "he is a unfit professor," "there is a particular dude," and "how is Project Cure finance"; but not examples like "the first thing that come into your mind is driving," where a modifier intervenes between subject and verb, or sentences like "what I really been worrying about lately is how I am going to do this quarter in school," where the is is followed by a sentence complement (See Labov et al 1968:214-215), or sentences where the is is in clause-final position, like "I guest that the way college is."[53]

On the basis of these criteria for determining potential occurrences of deletable is, are, and am, there were the following percentages for the total population of 42 informants: 5.1% is deletion (56 out of 1094 occurrences),[54] 4.2% are deletion (7 out of 167 occurrences), and 8.3% am deletion (17 out of 204 occurrences). There were 14 individuals who wrote these 80 deletions. (One of them (CS) should probably not be

considered active in the process of copula deletion since his only example occurred in the clause "this my own opinion" (See footnote 53). Among the other 13 individuals, the mean percentage of deletion after pronoun subjects (including dummy *there*) for all three forms (*am*, *is*, and *are*) was 20.7% (76 out of 366 occurrences).

I ran a Cedergren/Sankoff computer analysis on the total amount of copula deletion by the 13 informants using the formula $D = \frac{D}{F + C + D}$; where F, C, and D all are forms which follow pronoun subjects or dummy *there*. The factor groups which I selected were the following:

Group I: Type of Verb

M = Am
Z = Is
R = Are

Group II: Preceding Phonological Environment

K = Consonant[55]
W = Vowel

Group III: Following Syntactic Environment

V = Verb
N = Noun
P = Predicate adjective or locative[56]

These factor groups allow for a possible 18 environments; the data filled 12 of these (since neither deletable *are* nor *am* can be preceded by a consonant). The non-applications probabilities model of the computer program assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($p_o = 0.0$)

M = 0.12; Z = 0.22; R = 0.0
K = 0.0; W = 0.10
V = 0.0; N = 0.0; A = 0.01

Observed vs. expected frequencies of the various environments were as follows: (X^2 = 12.70)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
MWV	10/43	8.73	ZWV	6/18	5.29
MWN	0/10	2.02	ZWN	2/16	4.70
MWA	7/30	6.25	ZWA	13/36	10.76
RWV	3/31	3.00	ZKV	2/18	3.94
RWN	0/8	0.77	ZKN	23/79	17.27
RWA	4/32	3.29	ZKA	6/46	10.18

The results of this run show that of the three forms, _is_ was most subject to deletion, _am_ somewhat less and _are_ least. This is the same relationship of the three forms as resulted from the earlier analysis using Labov's formula for deletion. It is also completely contrary to the results of previous studies, which show _are_ deletion most common and _am_ deletion very rare. These results also show that a pronoun ending in a vowel was slightly more likely to precede a deleted copula than one ending in a consonant. They do not show, however, that the following syntactic environment had any relevance for deletion at all.

In a further effort to try to understand the variation between presence and absence of the copula, I ran several more programs: one on _is_ deletion alone, one on _are_ deletion alone, and one on _am_ deletion. Factor groups for the _is_ deletion program included:

Group I: Preceding Phonological Environment

K = Consonant
W = Vowel

Group II: Following Syntactic Environment

V = Verb
N = Noun
A = Adjective or locative

Group III: Type of Pronoun Subject

P = Personal pronoun
O = Other (including dummy *there*)

This division allowed for a possibility of 12 environments, all of which were filled. The non-applications probabilities model of the program assigned the following weights to the various factors: (p_o = .115)

K = 0.0; W = 0.16
V = 0.0; N = 0.15; A = 0.02
P = 0.05; O = 0.0

Observed vs. expected frequencies were as follows: (X^2 = 12.72)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
KVP	1/6	0.94	KVO	1/12	1.38
KNP	7/25	7.06	KNO	16/54	13.32
KAP	5/36	6.14	KAO	1/9	1.16
WVP	6/13	3.75	WVO	0/5	1.26
WNP	1/14	5.52	WNO	1/2	0.73
WAP	12/30	8.99	WAO	1/6	1.59

This analysis is not very revealing; that is, it does not give any better understanding of the variation than before. It does indicate, like the previous analysis, that a preceding vowel favors deletion more than a preceding consonant, and it does show some difference

between types of following syntactic environments; that is, a following noun phrase favors deletion more than either a verb or adjective (again contrary to expectations). But it does not indicate any significant difference in whether the subject of the verb is a personal pronoun or not. This latter failing is due primarily to the results obtained for one environment (WNP, which equals a preceding environment of a personal pronoun subject ending in a vowel and a following syntactic environment of a noun phrase). The chi square for this cell is high (6.11); that is, the expected number of deletions (5.52) is far greater than the actual number observed (1). If the number of deletions in this environment were closer to 5, personal pronoun subjects would indeed favor deletion more than other types of subjects, such as relatives, indefinites, and interrogatives. The facts are, however, that there is only the one instance of <u>is</u> deletion in this environment ("she a very attractive young lady"), and the structure of the other examples in the same environment does not vary significantly from this to justify redistribution of the examples into other categories. Therefore the anomaly remains unexplained.

The analysis of both <u>are</u> deletion and <u>am</u> deletion shows one thing in common which is at odds with the results for <u>is</u> deletion; that is, both <u>are</u> deletion

and am deletion are completely inhibited by a following noun phrase: deletion never occurs in that environment. Following verbs and adjectives, however, show no appreciable difference in effect. The percentage of occurrence is nearly the same in both environments. For am deletion, for example, deletion is 23.3% before verbs (e.g. "all I trying to say") and also 23.3% before an adjective or locative (e.g. "I dumb" and "I in college").

Preceding phonological environments are not relevant for these forms, since contraction and deletion can only occur with a pronoun subject and the governing pronoun subjects all end in vowels. Therefore, for are I examined the possibility that there is a difference in whether we, you, or they was the subject of the verb. What I found was that are was deleted most frequently after you, in fact two to three times as often as it was deleted after we or they (you = 5/33; we = 1/16; they = 1/22). However, the frequency of are deletion is so low that this difference shows up as only a probability of 0.09 vs. 0.0 on the computer program analysis.

Another factor I examined with regard to are deletion was sex, because 6 of the 7 deletions were by females. The difference there proved not too significant either; the probability of deletion for females was 0.10 vs. 0.0 for males. The reverse was true for

am deletion, which was heavily restrained for females (applications model probabilities: F = 0.78; M = 0.0). I did not include sex as a factor in the program on is deletion, however, for the percentages for males and females were very similar: males = 29.2%; females 23.7%.

Regarding the correlation of other extra-linguistic factors with copula deletion, the socioeconomic status of the 13 individuals varied from level 1 to level 4 in 1960; the mean was 2.62. In 1972 status levels also varied widely (from 1 to 5), and the mean was 2.85. Socioeconomic status therefore showed no significant correlation with copula deletion.

Mobility showed only slight correlation; it was downward for 9 of the 13 informants, static for 1, and upward for only 3. The mean was -1.1. Racial isolation indexes were high for all but one informant (CG); the mean was 8.5. ACT scores were low for all but one informant (GD). The mean score was 7.5. All three of these factors--mobility, racial isolation, and ACT scores--show some correlation with copula deletion, but the tendency is not marked.

TABLE III-6

The Relationship of Copula Deletion* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	Tot.%	%am	#am	%is	#is	%are	#are	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
ED	54.2%:	100.0%	3/3 ;	64.3%	9/14;	14.3%	1/7	4	4	-1	8	M	8
BD	40.3	18.2	2/11;	50.0	20/40;	27.3	3/11	4	3	-3	9	F	8
EJ	37.5	100.0	4/4;	18.2	2/11;	0.0	0/1	3	3	-1	10	M	8
CG	33.3	50.0	1/2;	----	0/0;	0.0	0/1	2	2	-1	4	M	7
PD	25.0	----	0/0;	33.3	1/3;	0.0	0/1	3	2	-5	9	M	5
CR	16.0	33.3	4/12;	0.0	0/10;	0.0	0/3	2	3	+4	8	M	8
CB[57]	14.3	5.0	1/20;	25.9	7/27;	0.0	0/9	4	5	0	9	F	6
DG	14.3	----	0/0;	17.9	5/28;	0.0	0/7	3	3	-2	8	M	--
FJ	14.3	0.0	0/5;	37.5	3/8;	0.0	0/8	3	3	-1	9	M	8
PM	12.8	0.0	0/3;	7.1	2/29;	37.5	3/8	1	1	-2	8	F	6
RR	11.1	0.0	0/1;	12.5	1/8;	----	0/0	2	1	-4	9	M	5
GD	9.5	10.0	1/10;	14.3	1/7;	0.0	0/4	2	4	+1	10	F	12
ME	3.9	8.3	1/12;	3.6	1/28;	0.0	0/11	1	3	+1	10	F	9

*After pronoun subjects only, and in the case of *is* also after dummy *there*.

In conclusion, it is evident that this study of copula deletion in the writing of Dayton informants does not confirm many of the findings of previous studies. For example, although this study does confirm "the effect of a preceding pronoun" on deletion, it does not confirm "the effect of the following grammatical environments" nor "the quantitative relations of the contraction and deletion process" nor especially "the relations of _am_, _is_, and _are_." (Labov 1972a:128) Furthermore, although copula deletion in this study shows some correlation with racial isolation, downward mobility, and low ACT English scores, unlike Wolfram's study (1969), it shows no correlation with socioeconomic class.

I do not, however, view these failures of my data to confirm the results of previous studies or to correlate with others' findings as contradictions of those studies and findings. I do not even doubt, for instance, that contraction plus deletion may take place in the speech of my informants, as for others previously studied, as much as 95% of the time in certain environments. But I must emphasize here that what I have studied and am reporting on is not speech, but writing. And writing, though heavily influenced by speech, is different from speech. Furthermore, because it is

writing which is the subject of this study, it is possible to argue for example as follows:

1: Copula deletion before a verb form occurs very commonly in the Black English Vernacular--more commonly than in any other environment.

2: This pre-verbal environment has therefore become a particularly stigmatized environment and is the center of attention for teachers of Black English speakers.

3: Therefore, in the writing of BEV speakers who have come under the influence of these teachers, a following verb appears as the heaviest restraint against deletion rather than the environment which most favors deletion.

I am not altogether satisfied with this line of argument, for I think it attributes more influence to elementary and secondary teachers than is actually a fact. But it is certainly a possibility that the items in this study for which results appear most in contradiction with previous studies (such as copula deletion), may be the most common features in the Vernacular, the most heavily stigmatized, and therefore the most likely to come under pedagogical influence. The absence of habitual or distributive <u>be</u> is a very likely example of this possibility as the following discussion

emphasizes.

Past copula deletion (deleted was):

As I have noted previously, instances of past tense copula deletion were quite rare.[58] There were only 10 sentences (out of 853) which could possibly be construed as containing a deleted third singular was; there were no deleted first singular forms and only one deleted plural form. Several of these deletions are undoubtedly performance errors. One, for example, occurred at the point where a student turned a page. Another was a sentence written by an informant who sporadically omitted words of all kinds (nouns, pronouns, verbs, and prepositions) from every paper. Several other ambiguous sentences involved structures which could be viewed as appositives or modifiers (e.g. "His desk more like a table.")

The more interesting examples of apparent was deletion include 5 written by BD (e.g. "When a dance were to be held . . . she always there") and 1 by EJ. In each of these sentences there is no question regarding the tense of the verb, which is established by the tense in the preceding clause. There are, however, alternative explanations to the "deleted was" interpretation. One of these is that the verb deleted is is and that the informant has a different concept of

verb marking, particularly with regard to tense sequencing, than other speakers of English have. This seems a possible explanation for BD, who could sometimes write such sequences as the following: "By the time we got 15 or 16, we were like sisters. That bother V. Every time we (got)[59] together and some one ask us if we are sisters and she (~~says~~ say) *no*. She have a nasty expressions on her face. I tried to reason with her . . . " Yet, it is true that BD usually observed tense sequencing and also regularly used irregular past tense verbs. Perhaps a more plausible explanation for the apparent deleted <u>was</u> sentences is that it is uninflected, distributive <u>be</u>, not <u>was</u>, which is deleted. This explanation is supported by the co-occurrence of these deletions with what Fasold calls "frequency-of-occurrence adverbs" (for example, <u>always</u>) or with <u>when</u> "in the sense of whenever" clauses (Fasold 1972:166), or with other iterative or durative expressions, like <u>use(d)</u> <u>to</u>; e.g. "he use to bite people when they going out the door" or "Mom used to let me practice . . . if she there in the car."

Furthermore, this explanation--that the apparent deleted <u>was</u> examples are actually deleted <u>be</u> forms--is not incompatible with the fact that uninflected <u>be</u> itself was so rare in the writing of the Dayton informants. One thing which all the 42 seem to have learned

most completely in their 11 to 12 years in school was not to use uninflected be in their writing, for it is limited to less than half a dozen occurrences in all the written data. It is, in fact, most remarkable that in over 100,000 words and at least 10,000 clauses uninflected be occurs only 5 times, and even these 5 can be explained as deleted will's and would's rather than distributive be.[60]

It is just not possible to believe that none of the 42 informants ever use distributive be in their speech,[61] but it is clear that they have all learned not to write it. It is possible then that at times in an effort to avoid the use of be in writing, individuals omitted the verb altogether.

Unquestionably, copula deletion is one of the most interesting if puzzling phenomena I have investigated, and it is an undeniable fact that my results are in conflict with those of previous studies.

Plural is:

In their discussion of the Black Vernacular as spoken in Harlem, Labov et al (1968:221) state that BEV speakers "show firm person-number agreement with forms of am, is, and are which match the distribution of SE," and that in fact there are few cases "where is is used in contexts which would demand are in SE."

There is apparently evidence, however, that for some speakers of BEV person-number agreement does not exist even for the verb _be_, for Fasold and Wolfram state that "some speakers show no person-number agreement when full forms of _to be_ are used . . . . When the full forms of the present tense form is [sic] used, _is_ is used by these speakers for all persons." (1970:69)

The data on the Dayton informants does show that some speakers use _is_ frequently as a plural verb, but it does not confirm that there are individuals who use _is_ for all persons; there was no informant among them who used _is_ with either first or second person subjects, and furthermore there were none who used _is_ with _they_ as the subject. The use of _is_ as a plural verb was in fact for most of the informants relatively infrequent even with a third person noun phrase as subject. There were 33 instances of third plural _is_ out of 434 potential occurrences (7.6%).[62] Although there were 16 informants who used _is_ as a third plural verb at least once (the mean for these 16 was 15.3% plural _is_), the majority of them used it only once or twice, and only three informants (EJ, MB, and GD) used _is_ more than 20% of the time.

The socioeconomic status of those who wrote plural _is_ was generally low. The mean status level for the 16 informants for 1960 was 2.13, and the mean for 1972

was 2.56. Mobility of those who wrote plural *is* was also generally downward; only three of the 16 informants had upward mobility; the mean was -0.9. Racial isolation indexes were also predictably high; the mean was 8.5. ACT scores averaged near the norm; the mean score was 9.5, but there were several individuals with higher scores--notably, HJ, TA, and CM.

TABLE III-7

The Relationship of Plural *is* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	100.0%	3/3	3	3	-1	10	M	8
MB	45.5	5/11	3	1	-5	10	F	9
GD	37.5	3/8	2	4	+1	10	F	12
CG	20.0	1/5	2	2	-1	4	M	7
MJ	20.0	1/5	2	5	+3	7	F	5
HJ	18.2	2/11	2	3	+1	9	F	14
BD	17.2	5/29	4	3	-3	9	F	8
HA	16.7	1/6	1	2	-1	10	F	6
CM	15.8	3/19	2	3	-1	7	F	17
PM	15.0	3/20	1	1	-2	8	F	6
ED	14.3	1/7	4	4	-1	8	M	8
PJ	10.0	1/10	1	1	-3	8	F	10
TA	9.1	1/11	3	4	-1	10	M	15
CH	7.1	1/14	1	3	0	10	M	9
RE	6.7	1/15	2	1	+1	10	F	8
WS	2.4	1/42	1	1	-1	6	F	--

Females who used plural *is* greatly outnumbered males--11 to 5--but the mean percentage of plural *is* for the two groups is nearly the same; for the 11 females the mean is 14.8%, and for the 5 males the mean is 17.5%. Eliminating the one female with only 2% plural *is* (WS) tilts the percentage in the other direction; the mean for 10 females is 18.7%. Sex, therefore, does not seem to be a significant factor in the use of plural *is*. This conclusion was borne out by including sex as a factor group when running the data on the Cedergren/Sankoff computer program. (See pp. 133-134.)

I ran the data on third plural *is* on the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis computer program in order to determine the relative weights of various factors apparently contributing toward its use. When I first ran the program, I included as one of the factor groups a category which specified the type of structure immediately preceding the verb. This group I broke down into five elements, which included Z (a plural noun), S (a singular noun), E (an expletive; that is, *there*), R (a relative pronoun), and 0 (anything else). Early runs on the computer indicated that neither Z, R, nor surprisingly E favored the use of *is*. On the other hand, S did favor the use of *is* and so apparently did 0, which was supposed to be "the residual category . . . having no effect on rule probability." (Cedergren/Sankoff 1974:342) Since

obviously 0 does not really affect the use of *is* or *are* as a third plural verb, I later combined categories 0 and Z. The factor groups which I then divided the data into were as follows:

Group I: Sex of Writer

F = Female
M = Male

Group II: Type of Subject

C = Compound subject
P = *People*
X = Other plural noun

Group III: Preceding Word Type

S = Singular noun
0 = Other

These factor groups provided a possibility for 12 potential environments. The data filled 10 of the 12 environments. The non-applications probabilities model of the computer program assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($p_0 = 0.07$)

F = 0.06; M = 0.0
C = 0.40; P = 0.22; X = 0.0
S = 0.38; 0 = 0.0

The results of this run indicated that the effect of a preceding singular noun, whether part of a compound subject (e.g. "love and hate is different feelings") or part of a phrase which modified the true plural subject (e.g. "the first things which enter my mind when you speak of the American Dream is to be rich and powerful") had approximately the same effect on the use of *is*. Therefore,

in the final run I combined S and C, filling 7 out of the 8 possible environments. The resulting feature weights were as follows: (p_o = 0.07)

F = 0.06; M = 0.0
P = 0.22; X = 0.0
S = 0.41; O = 0.0

Observed vs. expected frequencies of the various environments were: (X^2 = 2.00)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
FXO	13/105[63]	12.93	MXO	2/29	2.08
FXS	9/21	10.15	MXS	3/4	1.81
FPO	3/8	2.51	MPO	1/5	1.37
			MPS	1/2	1.14

This computer analysis therefore confirms the earlier tentative conclusion that sex was not a significant factor in the use of plural *is*. Furthermore, the analysis tells us that the most influential linguistic factor in the occurrence of plural *is* was an adjacent singular noun phrase. It also shows that the occurrence of plural *is* was favored by the use of *people* as the subject or antecedent (e.g. "all people is judge by their appearance" and "people who is handicapped"). On the other hand, plural *is* did not frequently occur following expletive *there*. There were some sentences where *there* preceded *is* (e.g. "there is about half of the people is left"), but there were many more where *there* was followed by *are* (e.g. "There are teacher that is willing to help you").

In conclusion, the use of *is* as a plural verb was quite limited although it was a variant sometimes used by a good number of people. One individual (EJ) always used *is* when the subject was a plural noun phrase; however, even this informant used *are* when the pronoun *they* was the subject. The occurrence of plural *is* is therefore definitely rule governed.

Plural *was*:

In their 1968 study of the Black Vernacular in New York, Labov et al include a section on "person-number agreement of *was*." Their main conclusion regarding the use of *was* vs. *were* is that "there is no agreement for *was*," that there is "overwhelming" evidence that "*was* is the NNE form" (1968:249)[64]

Not unsurprisingly, then, I found that *was* as a plural verb had a much higher frequency of occurrence than plural *is*. There were 49 *was* forms out of a potential 312 occurrences (15.7%).[65] Fourteen individuals wrote the 49 forms; among these 14, the mean was 31.8% *was*. One individual (CB) used *was* as a plural over 90% of the time; the others, with one exception (TA), used *was* a significant percentage of the time but never used it more than *were*.

The use of *was* shows no apparent correlation with socioeconomic status, for although the majority of

individuals who wrote was were in the lower status levels in both 1960 (mean = 2.36) and 1972 (mean = 2.64), the female with the almost categorical use of was was at the highest level in 1960 and the second highest level in 1972. The majority of the 14 individuals who used plural was were also downwardly mobile; the mean was -1. However, there were several females (LJ, HJ, and GD) who were exceptions. Racial isolation indexes appear to correlate with the use of was; they were almost consistently high, and the mean was 9.1. In addition, all but one of the 14 individuals who wrote was had attended all-black high schools for all four years, and even the one exception (LJ) graduated from an all-black school.

Sex also appears to correlate with the use of was; 10 of the 14 were females, and the mean for these females (37.0%) was over twice as high as the mean for the four males (14.3%). Sex therefore, was a factor which I included in the Cedergren/Sankoff computer analysis of was. (See the discussion below, pp. 137-139.) ACT scores, on the other hand, do not show any correlation with was. Though several informants had low scores, several others had relatively high ones; the mean was 10, only slightly above the group norm.

TABLE III-8

The Relationship of Plural *was* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.# 3pl.	#/Pot.# 1&2pl.	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
CB	92.3%	10/11	2/2	4	5	0	9	F	6
PM	41.7	4/9	1/3	1	1	-2	8	F	6
BD	40.0	8/18	4/12	4	3	-3	9	F	8
CH	40.0	2/3	0/2	1	3	0	10	M	9
GD	33.3	2/6	---	2	4	+1	10	F	12
HA	33.3	1/3	---	1	2	-1	10	F	6
EJ	33.3	1/2	0/1	3	3	-1	10	M	8
HJ	30.0	3/10	---	2	3	+1	9	F	14
PJ	25.0	2/7	0/1	1	1	-3	8	F	10
MB	22.2	4/16	0/2	3	1	-5	10	F	9
LJ	22.2	2/8	0/1	2	3	+3	5	F	13
JW	11.1	1/9	---	4	2	-3	10	M	14
CL	10.0	1/5	0/5	2	2	0	10	F	--
TA	5.6	1/15	0/3	3	4	-1	10	M	15

For the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis of plural *was*, I selected the following factors:

Group I: Sex of Writer

F = Female
M = Male

Group II: Type of Subject or Antecedent[66]

P = Personal pronoun[67]
L = *People*
O = Other plural noun

Group III: Adjoining Syntactic Environment[68]

S = Singular noun or pronoun
R = Relative pronoun
Y = The indefinite pronoun you
X = Plural noun with final s deleted
Z = Other plural noun or pronoun

This division into three groups allows for a possibility of 30 environments. The data filled 16 of these environments. The non-applications probabilities model assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($p_o = 0.06$)

F = 0.23; M = 0.0
P = 0.0; L = 0.43; 0 = 0.02
S = 0.22; R = 0.26; Y = 0.0; X = 0.41; Z = 0.01

Because of the fact that the pronoun you (Y in Group III) showed no significantly different probability than other plural nouns or pronouns (Z), I reran the program conflating these two categories, thereby reducing the number of potential environments to 24, 14 of which were filled. The resulting input probability was 0.065. All feature weights were the same except that R was slightly but not significantly less (0.25), Y was eliminated, and Z = 0.0. Observed vs. expected frequencies were as follows: ($X^2 = 4.48$)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
FPZ	11/38	10.67	MPZ	1/14	0.91
FPS	1/5	2.18	MLZ	1/2	0.93
FLZ	1/2	1.18	MLS	1/1	0.58
FLR	1/2	1.39	MOZ	1/14	1.16
FOZ	11/38	11.20	MOS	1/2	0.56
FOS	6/13	5.81	MOR	0/2	0.63
FOX	7/12	7.00			
FOR	5/8	3.79			

It is clear from this analysis that the two features which most favored the use of *was* were L (*people* as the subject; e.g. "these brown-skin people was simply not noticeable") and X (an adjoining plural noun without the plural marker; e.g. "those six thing was not very important"). Relative subjects also significantly favored the use of *was* (e.g. "the work sheets that was done each week"), and an adjoining singular noun or pronoun had a similar effect (e.g. "my roommate and I was in the book store"). It is obvious too that sex was a factor in the use of plural *was*. The category F (female) definitely favored the use of *was*--much more so than the same feature affected the use of plural *is*.

There are other significant differences between the linguistic environments which favored the use of plural *was* and those which favored plural *is*. Besides the fact that plural *was* was much more frequent than plural *is*, there are at least two features which favored *was*, but not *is*. These are relative pronoun subjects and plural nouns with the plural marker missing.[69] Also it is a fact that although personal pronoun subjects did not favor the use of *was*, they did occur. Both *we* and *you* occurred three times each with *was*;[70] *they* occurred six times with *was*. In contrast, none of these pronouns ever co-occurred with *is*.

There are, on the other hand, several similarities

between plural was and plural is. Both were favored by the use of people as a subject and by the presence of an adjoining singular noun phrase. The relative probabilities of these two features are almost exactly reversed, however; for was the probability of people = 0.43, and of an adjoining singular noun or pronoun = 0.22; for is the probabilities were for people 0.22; for an adjoining singular noun 0.42. Another similarity between plural was and plural is is the fact that neither was favored by a preceding expletive there. Only when the verb was followed by a determiner a (e.g. "there was a lot") was was common in this context.

One important generalization which describes both variables (plural was and is) is the fact that the linguistic environments which favored their occurrence are all environments which are not overtly marked plural. Some of these are clearly marked singular (category S for both variables); others are categories which though not marked singular, are also not marked plural. People, for example, carries no overt plural marker; neither does it have an alternative singular form. Relative pronouns also are not marked for number, and neither are those nouns with plural markers absent; only the context (a plural antecedent or quantifier) indicates that their meaning is plural.

All of this does not indicate, however, that was and is did not occur with overtly marked plural subjects or surrounding environments. They did. There were a number of examples like "the men of ideas was the men living on the planet earth," "we was so far behind," and "to make sure things is going right." But these kinds of sentences had a much lower percentage of occurrence by comparison with those in which the was or is occurred with subjects or adjoining noun phrases which were not overtly marked plural. The conclusion I must draw then is that my Dayton informants were quite aware of the grammatical concept of agreement as it applies to both the use of is and are and to was and were. Both is and was were used overwhelmingly in contexts not marked plural.

Irregular verbs:

There are relatively few verbs in English whose past tense and past participle forms are distinct, and apparently for many Black speakers, these distinctions are even fewer; that is, there is a merging of past and past participle forms which are distinct in other dialects. Fasold and Wolfram go so far as to say that "in Negro dialect . . . there may not be any irregular verbs for which the past tense and past participle are distinct." (1970:62)

Although my own data does not support this extreme statement, it does support Fasold and Wolfram's finding that it is "more commonly the simple past form" rather than the past participle that "is generalized to serve both functions." (1970:62) There were 18 examples of irregular past tense forms being used as past participles out of a potential 202[71] occurrences; that is an occurrence rate of 8.9%. In contrast, there were only 4 examples of past participles being used as past tense verbs out of a possible 556[72]--an occurrence rate of less than 1 percent.

The past forms which functioned as past participles include a number of the most common verbs in the language (_did_, _came_, _went_, _gave_, _ran_, _fell_, and _took_) and several less common but still quite frequent verbs (_stole_, _tore_, and _chose_). The data is too limited on all but the first four of these verbs to give a reliable percentage of occurrence. Among these four, however, the highest percentage of occurrence involves the form _did_ (5 out of 17 occurrences or 29.4%). Examples include "I have did more reading" and "he has not did anything." _Went_ occurred as a past participle 2 out of 8 times (e.g. "who has went through the suffering"); _came_ was less frequent (2 out of 11 times); e.g. "we have came a long way"); _gave_ occurred once out of 8 times (e.g. "she should have gave the Shortleys a little priority").

More interesting is the fact that the past forms were much more likely to occur after auxiliary _have_ (35.7%) than after auxiliary _be_ (9.7%). When the participle occurred without an expressed auxiliary (e.g. "a family known as the Shortleys"), it was unlikely to be expressed with the past form, although there was one instance: "Everything ran by gas or electricity was automatically cut off."

The socioeconomic status of the 10 individuals (6 females and 4 males) who used irregular past tense forms as past participles varied from 1 to 4 in 1960 and from 1 to 5 in 1972. The means were 2.7 and 2.9 respectively. Mobility was generally downward, including several individuals with very negative mobility (MB, DP, and BD); the mean was -1.5. Racial isolation indexes were high for all but two informants; the mean was 8.8. ACT scores varied; the mean was at the norm--9.2.

The four past participle forms which were used as past tense verbs were written by three individuals (2 females and 1 male). The forms were _seen_, _worn_, _taken_, and _begun_. Examples include "When I got my grades, I seen all those D's and F's" and "the dresses that I worn to school."

TABLE III-9

The Relationship of the Use of Irregular Past Tense Verbs as Past Participles to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
GD	100.0%	2/2	2	4	+1	10	F	12
WM	66.7	2/3	3	3	-1	6	M	11
FJ	60.0	3/5	3	3	-1	9	M	8
MB	42.9	3/7	3	1	-5	10	F	9
PD	33.3	1/3	3	2	-5	9	M	5
CB	33.3	1/3	4	5	0	9	F	6
BD	20.0	1/5	4	3	-3	9	F	8
ME	18.2	2/11	1	3	+1	10	F	9
TA	7.1	1/14	3	4	-1	10	M	15
WS	5.9	1/17	1	1	-1	6	F	--

TABLE III-10

The Relationship of the Use of Irregular Past Participles as Past Tense Verbs to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
LJ	11.1%	2/18	2	3	+3	5	F	13
RW	8.3	1/12	4	5	+1	7	M	3
MJ	7.1	1/14	2	5	+3	7	F	5

The socioeconomic status of the three people who used past participles as past tense verbs was near the norm in 1960 (2.67) but much higher than the norm in 1972 (4.33). All three individuals were also upwardly

mobile; the mean was +2.3. Racial isolation indexes, on the other hand, were unusually low; the mean was 6.3. ACT scores averaged below the norm; the mean score was 7. Although means based on three individuals are not statistically reliable and generalizations must therefore not be weighed too heavily, several extra-linguistic factors appear to have some relevance for this variable: the combination of a high 1972 SES, upward mobility, and low racial isolation indexes, plus the fact that only three people wrote past participles for past tense verbs suggest that this use may be a hypercorrection rather than a regular feature of the Vernacular.

Furthermore, the limited occurrence of past participles functioning as past tense verbs indicates that there is little likelihood that the participle is displacing the past tense form for any verb. The opposite tendency--that past tense forms are displacing some past participles cannot be substantiated either, but certainly this process is more common. For some people at least there is a variable rule for which form functions as the past tense verb.

a before vowels:

The use of indefinite a for an before vowels has often been remarked as a common feature of the speech

of both Black Americans and many Southern Whites. The feature has recently been studied by R. Terrebonne (1973) whose statistical analysis reveals that, although the use of a before vowels is not categorical for Black speakers (as Fasold and Wolfram have suggested (1970:56)), it is more common in the speech of Blacks than in the speech of White Southerners--a difference of 63% vs. 47%.

The writing of the Dayton informants reveals, of course, a much lower percentage of occurrence than either of these figures, though the percentage for the Dayton informants is by no means insignificant. The indefinite article before a vowel was written as a or ø 53 times out of a potential 281 cases.[73] This is an occurrence of 18.9%. Twenty-five individuals were responsible for these 53 examples and 21 of them had more than 10% a or ø before vowels.

Among the 25, the 11 males had a mean of 37% a; the mean for the 14 females was 25%. Sex therefore appears to be a factor in the use of a or ø before vowels. (See the discussion below on the results of including this factor in the Cedergren/Sankoff computer analysis.)

Socioeconomic status of the 25 individuals ranged in both 1960 and 1972 from the lowest to the highest level; the mean for 1960 was 2.36, and in 1972 the mean was 2.88 The item does not therefore appear to correlate

TABLE III-11

The Relationship of a Before Vowels to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	100.0%	5/5	3	3	-1	10	M	8
RR	100.0	3/3	2	1	-4	9	M	5
ED	100.0	3/3	4	4	-1	8	M	8
FJ	100.0	1/1	3	3	-1	9	M	8
CB	77.8	7/9	4	5	0	9	F	6
PM	66.7	2/3	1	1	-2	8	F	6
WM	50.0	1/2	3	3	-1	6	M	11
BD	40.0	4/10	4	3	-3	9	F	8
ME	35.3	6/17	1	3	+1	10	F	9
DG	33.3	1/3	3	3	-2	8	M	--
MW	33.3	1/3	2	2	0	9	M	8
CL	33.3	1/3	2	2	0	10	F	--
CR	28.6	2/7	2	3	+4	8	M	8
LJ	25.0	1/4	2	3	+3	5	F	13
MJ	25.0	1/4	2	5	+3	7	F	5
FI	20.0	1/5	2	3	+3	9	F	5
JC	20.0	1/5	2	3	0	5	M	15
DJ	20.0	4/20	3	3	+4	2	F	19
PJ	16.7	2/12	1	1	-3	8	F	10
RJ	14.3	1/7	3	4	+1	8	F	12
HJ	14.3	1/7	2	3	+1	9	F	14
RE	9.1	1/11	2	1	+1	10	F	8
CH	9.1	1/11	1	3	0	10	M	9
HS	9.1	1/11	4	6	+1	8	M	11
WS	5.0	1/20	1	1	-1	6	F	--

with socioeconomic status. Mobility, however, was slightly upward; the mean was +0.1. Racial isolation indexes reflect the norm of 8, and the mean ACT score for the 25 was 9.4, which is also very near the norm.

I ran the a vs. an data[74] on the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis program, in order to determine what factors promote the use of a rather than an and the relative weights of these various factors. Following generally the procedure of R. Terrebonne in his "Variable Rule Analysis of the Indefinite Article an," (1973)[75] I divided my data into the following factor groups:

Group I: Following Syntactic Unit

H = Headword (e.g. "a attitude")
A = Adjectival (e.g. "a unfit professor")
C = Compound or noun adjunct (e.g. "a Urban Corp student")

Group II: Following Vowel Type

U = Unstressed (e.g. "a experiment")
F = Front stressed (e.g. "a itch")
B = Non-front stressed (e.g. "a officer")

Group III: Following Consonant Type

N = Nasal (e.g. "a instructor")
X = Non-nasal (e.g. "a activist")

Group IV: Sex of the Writer

M = Men
W = Women

These factor groups allow for a total of 36 possible environments. My data provided tokens for 28 of these environments. The non-applications probabilities model

assigned the following weights to the various factors: (p_o = 0.07)

H = 0.0; A = 0.19; C = 0.53[76]
U = 0.0; F = 0.08; B = 0.28
N = 0.08; X = 0.0
M = 0.12; W = 0.0

Observed vs. expected frequencies of the various environments were as follows: (X^2 = 26.84)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
MHUN	0/3	0.73	WHUN	2/4	0.55
MHBN	1/3	1.37	WHBN	1/2	0.76
MHFN	2/8	2.45	WHFN	0/8	1.67
MHUX	0/3	0.54	WHUX	1/17	1.12
MHBX	1/2	0.83	WHBX	2/8	2.64
MHFX	3/9	2.23	WHFX	7/44	6.29
MAUN	6/10	3.88	WAUN	1/10	3.03
MABN	0/1	0.56	WABN	3/3	1.50
MAFN	0/1	0.44	WAFN	1/1	0.36
MAUX	0/1	0.34	WAUX	0/2	0.49
MABX	1/4	2.10	WABX	5/8	3.67
MAFX	3/5	1.96	WAFX	4/15	4.61
MCFN	1/1	0.67	WCBX	2/4	2.74
MCUX	2/2	1.23	WCFX	2/4	2.39

It is clear from this data that the linguistic factor which favored most the use of a before vowels was a following compound or noun adjunct (C); the second most favored environment was a following non-front stressed vowel (B); third was a following adjectival (A). A following stressed front vowel (F) and a following nasal (N) appear to favor the use of a only slightly and not significantly. The fact that the writer was male also favored the use of a.

These results are in agreement in several important

respects with the findings of R. Terrebonne, who has analyzed the occurrence of a before vowels in the speech of 12 Black informants from Ohio. Both findings agree that a following compound is the factor that influences the use of a the most, that following unstressed vowels do not favor the use of a, and that the sex of the speaker being male does favor the use of a. There are, however, several differences between his findings and my own. The most obvious and expected difference is that R. Terrebonne found a much higher incidence of a before vowels in the speech of his 12 informants than I found in the writing of my 42 informants (63% vs. 19%), and even if I narrow my group to the 25 individuals who showed some a/an variability, the percentage of a is 28.5--far short of the 63% a found in speech. Most interesting is the fact that his group includes several of the same individuals who are in my group, and among these individuals are some whose speech pattern is very different from their writing pattern. One male informant, for example, used a or ∅ 19 out of 20 times in his speech; in his writing he used a once out of 11 times. This of course suggests that speech and writing are quite different phenomena, even within the same individual.

Two other differences between my findings and those of R. Terrebonne--that is, the fact that in his data a following headword favored the use of a nearly

as much as a following compound and that front stressed vowels favored the use of a more than back stressed vowels (0.40 vs. 0.26)--are puzzling, but may also be related to fundamental differences between speech and writing. Obviously these differences are much in need of further investigation. It is clear, in any case, however, that the use of a before vowels has one of the highest percentages of occurrence of any of the features I have studied.

Deleted a:

Little attention has been given to the general process of schwa deletion, which sometimes occurs in BEV,[77] though Fasold and Wolfram (1970:57) do mention the occasional absence "of the first syllable" of words which begin with unstressed syllables, such as "'rithmetic, 'member, 'cept, or 'bout." The same two authors also state that "less frequently, and mostly among younger children," the indefinite article a "may be absent," (1970:56-57) though they ascribe this absence to grammatical rather than phonological factors.

My own findings on the subject suggest that there are many examples of schwa deletion which are not likely due to grammatical conditioning factors but rather to phonological factors. Though I have not statistically measured the total percentage of general schwa deletion

evidenced in the writing of the Dayton informants (a monumental task!),[78] I have noted many examples of schwa deletion besides those involving the indefinite article. Some of these resulted in parts of words being deleted (e.g. "the class is sleep"); others resulted in entire words being omitted (e.g. "some of students try" with the deleted, "just name a few" with to deleted, "because lack of money" with of deleted, and "soon as I went" with as deleted).

The most common word by far, however, to illustrate schwa deletion is of course the indefinite article a; e.g. "she very attractive young lady" and "my school did not have good grading system." These are the only kinds of schwa deletion which I have statistically measured.

My findings were that when measured against the potential number of cases in which a might have been deleted, the absence of the indefinite article was rare. The percentage of a deletion for all 42 informants was only 1.6% (34 out of a potential 2,163 instances); 29 of the 42 informants never once deleted a before a consonant, and among the 13 individuals who did show some deleted a, the percentage was also low, only 4.2%.

In terms of socioeconomic status, the 13 were spread throughout all status levels in 1960 (mean = 2.31) and

from level 1 through level 5 in 1972 (mean = 2.38). There were, however, more individuals from the lower status levels; in 1960 7 of the 13 were at levels 2 or 1; in 1972 11 of the 13 were at level 3 or below. Deleted a was therefore more characteristic of, but not limited to, individuals with lower socioeconomic status.

Concerning the mobility of the informants, only one male who showed deleted a had upward mobility. By far the majority of individuals who deleted a were downwardly mobile; the mean was -1.5. Furthermore, only two individuals had a racial isolation index below 8; the mean was 8.4; that is, the great majority of the 13 came from areas heavily populated with Blacks and they had attended all-black schools. In fact 11 of the 13 had spent all four years in a black high school. ACT scores of those with deleted a were quite low; the mean score of 10 of the 13 informants (3 did not take the test) was 7.5. Not one of the 13 was above the eighth percentile on the English section of the ACT test.

There were 8 males and 5 females who deleted a. Males with deleted a had a higher mean percentage (5.0%) than females (3.3%), and the only two individuals to have a percentage above 5% were two males (EJ and DG), who had 9.2 and 9.0% deleted a respectively. For these two males, then, the feature may have some significance, but

it is questionable whether deleted a had any significance for any of the other informants. Probably for at least one or two individuals (e.g. WS, who had 1 deletion out of a possible 135) the deletion represents a performance error.

TABLE III-12

The Relationship of Deleted a to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	9.2%	8/87	3	3	-1	10	M	8
DG	9.0	6/67	3	3	-2	8	M	--
ED	5.0	1/20	4	4	-1	8	M	8
DL	5.0	1/20	2	2	-1	9	F	10
RR	4.8	2/42	2	1	-4	9	M	5
BD	4.8	5/104	4	3	-3	9	F	8
CH	3.6	2/55	1	3	0	10	M	9
PJ	3.5	3/86	1	1	-3	8	F	10
PH	2.9	1/35	1	1	--	--	M	--
FJ	2.8	1/36	3	3	-1	9	M	8
RW	2.5	1/40	4	5	+1	7	M	3
PM	2.3	2/87	1	1	-2	8	F	6
WS	0.7	1/135	1	1	-1	6	F	--

The difference between deleted a and deleted an is also of doubtful significance. The data for my 42 informants does not confirm Fasold and Wolfram's comment that the article is absent less frequently before consonants

than before vowels (1970:56). In the Dayton data absence is equally infrequent in both environments (1.6% deleted potential a vs. 1.8% deleted potential an).

Neither does my data confirm Fasold and Wolfram's statement (1970:56) that "with a selected group of words (of more than one syllable) which may begin with a vowel similar to a (phonetically [ə]), the article may also be completely absent." Among the examples in my data are the following: "making $4.50 hour" and "it is all black school." These and other sentences in the data cannot reflect deletion or merging of a before a polysyllabic word beginning with schwa.

The factors that do promote a deletion are still unclear. Some may be due to grammatical factors, but the evidence here points to a phonological explanation being more plausible for most deletions. In any case the variable seems to be of little significance because of its low frequency of occurrence.

Double negatives:

The use of multiple negation by Black Vernacular speakers has been studied extensively. Wolfram, for example, included it as one of the variables in his study of "Detroit Negro Speech" (1969) and determined that among his informants multiple negation showed "sharp social stratification" (1969:164), being used much more

frequently by working class individuals than middle class individuals.

The most definitive treatment of multiple negation, however, is by William Labov et al (1968) and expanded by Labov in his article "Negative Attraction and Negative Concord" (1972a:130-196). It is these discussions by Labov that I draw on here as the basis for my analysis of what constitutes negative concord among the Dayton informants.

In the New York study Labov et al come to the conclusion that "the basic negative concord rule for NNE is that it is <u>not</u> optional." (1968:276) They also note, however, that adults "fall away rapidly from the NNE categorical rule" (1968:279). The Dayton informants, being then in a period of transition from adolescence to adulthood and having successfully completed high school, would be expected to have a variable rule for negative concord. This indeed seems to be the case.

Determining the number of potential double (or multiple)[79] negatives used by the Dayton informants is both complicated by and dependent upon the fact that there are several possible combinations of elements which are capable of producing double negatives in English. I have divided these combinations into two major categories and several minor ones on the basis

of the kinds of elements subject to negation in the sentences in which they occurred.

The most common type of potential double negative in my data involved a negated auxiliary verb and a following Indefinite (e.g. "you don't have no one" and "they don't know anything"). There were 94 examples of this type of construction, and 13 of them (13.8%) actually had double negatives. I did not, however, include in this total sentences in which the negative had already been postposed to the Indefinite;[80] for example, "that was no fun" and "the black youth today has nothing," for the act of postposing itself is in "complementary distribution with negative concord." (Labov 1972a:191)

The second most common type of potential double negative involved a negative subject Indefinite and a following verb which sometimes did and sometimes did not also show negation; e.g. "Neither one didn't care" and "no one volunteered." I counted all sentences beginning with negative Indefinites as potential double negatives since the attraction of the negative to the Indefinite does not preclude the possibility of negative concord also taking place.[81] There were 53 potential occurrences of this type of construction; 5 of these (9.4%) were realized as double negatives. One of them also involved Negative Inversion, that is, preposing of the negative

auxiliary verb to the beginning of the sentence: "Don't no nigger lives on Hillcrest."

Most of the other potential double negative constructions involved the possibility of concord between an adverb--usually (n)ever--and either a negated verb or an Indefinite (e.g. "I wasn't never notorious" and "she never complain about anything"). There were also 4 clauses with a negated verb followed at the end of the sentence by adverbial either ("I'm not Doris Day, either"). However, Labov writes that such forms "are to be classed with negative concord outside the sentence with NEG. Some of these," he says, "show concord . . . but very often we find no negative concord to such positions among speakers of BEV." (1972a:180-181) Predictably, then, none of the 4 sentences in my data ending with either showed concord.

Concord was generally the rule in those few sentences combining a negative verb and a following (n)ever (3 out of 4 times). One of these examples involves Negative Raising: "I don't think . . . my teachers never knew theirselves." Concord was not common, however, in the sentences where never was followed by an Indefinite (1 out of 14 times). This lack of negative concord with the Indefinites may be related to the fact that 11 of the 14 sentences involved a shifting of the never to a

position in front of the verb; e.g. "you never hear any of the good things" and "Dr. D. never said anything." However, the one example of concord between never and a following Indefinite has this identical structure ("she never attend no kind of dances") so that obviously concord of this type is possible if not common.

Of the remaining 9 examples of potential double negatives, one other involved a combination of a negative adverb and an indefinite pronoun. In this sentence the Indefinite preceded the negative adverb hardly: "No one hardly ever saw her out." I suspect that concord between hardly and other negative forms is quite common, but this sentence happens to be the only one in all my data with hardly, so that I can hardly draw any conclusion from it here. It is interesting too that the writer did not also negate ever; it is possible that there is a constraint on the extension of concord to include ever, but again the data is too limited to determine this.

The data was also limited with respect to sentences involving more than one Indefinite. There were two sentences beginning with a negative Indefinite and followed later by another Indefinite. Both of them were written by the same informant (ME). One resulted in a double negative, "No one want to be insulted by . . . no other means"; the other did not: "No one got anything from that." I rejected several other sentences as

potential double negatives; four of these were sentences with two Indefinites. However the first of these Indefinites in each sentence had already bypassed one opportunity for negative concord by Negative Post-posing, and was therefore unlikely to undergo concord at the second possibility. These included sentences like "I am no better than anyone" and "There can be no question in anyone's mind."

Other examples of sentences rejected as potential double negatives include one sentence with may and the passive voice ("No part of the players sticks may be raised") and two more clauses which begin with nor followed by the auxiliary verb and then the subject: "Nor would I ever hear from the lady" and "nor is there anyone." All three of these sentences are too formal to be within the realm of possible multiple negation.[82]

The six remaining potential double negatives all involved the preposition without followed by an Indefinite. One of these resulted in a double negative; the other five did not (e.g. "without any hassle" and "without nothing to do").

In all, there were a total of 178 sentences with potential double negatives; 25 of these (14.0%) were realized as double negatives and 12 people were involved in writing them. Among the 12, the mean percentage of double negatives was 30.9%. Several individuals had

a significant percentage of double negatives, although no student was without some variability. In terms of the types or kinds of double negatives which each of these 12 informants wrote (with the exception of EJ, who always wrote both of these types of sentences with double negatives), there was a division between those who specialized in Type I constructions, involving negated verbs followed by negative Indefinites and those with Type II double negatives, involving sentence initial Indefinites followed by negated verbs. There were more examples of Type I double negatives (13) than Type II's (5), but the percentage of potential occurrences was only slightly more for Type I's than Type II's (31.7% vs. 25%). This is largely because Type I sentences are much more common than Type II.

The socioeconomic status of those 12 people who wrote double negatives ranged from level 1 to level 4 in 1960 and from level 1 to level 5 in 1972. The means were 2.5 and 3.0. Among the three who had the highest socioeconomic status in 1972, only one (TA) wrote a Type I double negative, and in this sentence he underlined the Indefinite twice (See p. 164). This avoidance of Type I double negatives by individuals with higher SES suggests that the kind of double negative a person uses may be related to socioeconomic status, but that double negatives themselves are not characteristic of

any particular socioeconomic level.[83] The general mobility of most of the 12 people was downward (the mean was -0.3, very near the norm), though three females (LJ, ME, and GD) were upwardly mobile. Again it is interesting to note that none of these three females wrote any Type I double negatives.

Racial isolation indexes were high for all individuals except two (LJ = 5 and WM = 6); the mean was 8.8. The mean ACT score for those who wrote double negatives (excepting one who did not take the test) was 9.6. Only three informants were above the tenth percentile, only one of them significantly so (TA). ACT scores do not therefore show significant correlation with the use of double negatives. Regarding the sex of the 12 people, 4 were males and 8 were females; however, the percentage of double negatives written by the four males far outdistanced the percentage by the eight females (45.5% vs. 25.4%). The overall percentage of double negatives for all informants was very similar for males and females: 14.9% = mean for 16 males vs. 13.5% = mean for 21 females (5 individuals wrote no potential double negatives).

TABLE III-13

The Relationship of Double Negatives to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	83.3%	5/6	3	3	-1	10	M	8
CL	75.0	3/4	2	2	0	10	F	--
DL	50.0	1/2	2	2	-1	9	F	10
PM	44.4	4/9	1	1	-2	8	F	6
TA	42.9	3/7	3	4	-1	10	M	15
GD	33.3	1/3	2	4	+1	10	F	12
WM	33.3	1/3	3	3	0	6	M	11
LJ	25.0	1/4	2	3	+3	5	F	13
BD	22.2	2/9	4	3	-3	9	F	8
FJ	16.7	1/6	3	3	-1	9	M	8
ME	11.8	2/17	1	3	+1	10	F	9
CB	9.1	1/11	4	5	0	9	F	6

In summary, double negatives were not common in the data but were of significance for a number of individuals. Types of double negatives which are known to be characteristic of BEV speakers but not speakers of other dialects were quite rare, the most obvious example being the sentence with Negative Inversion: "Don't no nigger lives on Hillcrest." The writer of this sentence (ME), however, included it in a narrative as a quotation, which she claimed was made by a white sales clerk to her. Her memory of the event was colored by emotion, however, and her statement cannot be taken at face value.

A few of the other informants showed an awareness of the social stigma attached to double negatives. One double negative was a part of another narrative--a statement purported to have been made by a black male: "Black women ain't no good" and probably quoted or used by the writer--a female--to illustrate her low opinion of the speaker. One male (TA), who wrote several double negatives, underlined the second negative in two of his sentences (e.g. "I . . . don't like to take orders from noone") apparently as a mark of emphasis. This suggests that he was aware of the feature and was using it intentionally for effect.

Existential it:

One of the syntactic features which Labov et al studied among Black speakers in New York City was "the use of dummy [or existential] it where SE uses there." (1968:301) For some speakers they found that the use of existential it was categorical; for most they found it was a feature of "high frequency." (1968:302)

It was somewhat surprising therefore to find that the use of existential it was so rare in the writing of the Dayton informants, 7 examples (2.5%) out of a possible 281 occurrences.[84] There were in fact only five Dayton informants who wrote sentences with existential it; four of these informants wrote only one such sentence.

Only one informant (BT) used *it* exclusively, and the data on this student is very limited, so that it is unjustified to say that any of the informants did not also sometimes use *there*. One female (MB) wrote three sentences with existential *it*; she was the only informant besides BT to have a large percentage of *it* clauses, 60%.

Syntactically, existential *it* occurred most frequently in a position before noun phrases with quantifiers (e.g. "It is about 300 people living in the Residence Hall," "its always a few exceptions," and "it was one person that Paul like"). The reason for this concentration of occurrence, however, may be simply that the existential construction (whether with *it* or *there*) is quite common before such noun phrases.

Existential *it* was not characteristic of informants at any particular status level. The mean for 1960 was 2.8, which is slightly higher than the norm, but the mean for 1972 was 2.2, which is lower than the norm. None of the five individuals who used existential *it* were upwardly mobile; the mean was -2.2. The mean racial isolation index of the five informants was also quite high--8.8; that is, it was not used by any of the informants who had had much contact with Whites. The English ACT scores of the five people who used existential *it* were low; their mean score was 7.6. It was also more characteristic of females than males; four of the five

were females, and all but one occurrence of *it* was written by females.

TABLE III-14

The Relationship of Existential *it* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
BT	100.0%	1/1	3	1	-3	8	F	9
MB	60.0	3/5	3	1	-5	10	F	9
FJ	16.7	1/6	3	3	-1	9	M	8
CB	11.1	1/9	4	5	0	9	F	6
PM	3.0	1/33	1	1	-2	8	F	6

In summary, although the means for several extra-linguistic factors appear to correlate with the use of existential *it*, these means are based on too few individuals to draw any far-reaching conclusions. It is safe to say, however, that because of its limited occurrence in the writing of the 42 informants, this feature is of little significance.

Objective pronouns in plural subjects:

In a footnote to an article titled "Toward Reading Materials for Speakers of Black English" (1969:152), Wolfram and Fasold write, "In coordinate noun phrases, the distinction between objective and subjective forms of the pronoun is often neutralized, so that the 'objective' form may function as a grammatical subject." Just how

common this feature is in BEV Wolfram and Fasold do not say. The item has apparently not previously been the subject of a statistical count. This failure to study the feature is probably a result of a belief that this feature is a minor one or at least quite uncommon.

The writing of the Dayton informants does in one sense support this belief. There were only five occurrences of objective pronouns in plural subjects.[85] However, the percentage of occurrence of the feature was quite high (10% for all 42 informants and 50% for the five people who used the feature). The fact is that the limited use of the feature is a result simply of there being very few potential occurrences of the variable in writing. Students are often taught in English classes in school to "avoid the use of personal pronouns" in their writing. Thus, it is not surprising that half of the informants had no potential occurrences of objective pronouns in plural subjects, and many others had only one or two. Examples which did occur include "I don't think me and my aunt get along too well," "Us girls need something to do," and "When him or [and] her get together").

The mean SES levels of the five people who wrote the five objective pronoun subjects were near the norms; in 1960 the mean was 2.6, and in 1972 the mean was 2.8. Only one of the informants (ME) was upwardly mobile;

the mobility mean was -1.2. The item seems also to be characteristic of individuals with little contact with Whites; all of the informants had a high racial isolation index; three had the maximum index of 10 and two an index of 8 (the mean was 9.2). In addition, all but one had attended all-black schools for all four years in high school. In relation to the ACT test, one of the informants had a relatively high score of 15; one did not take the test; the others had low ACT scores. The mean for the four was 10.3, slightly above the norm. The item does not appear to have significance in terms of the sex of the informants who used it; three were males and two were females.

TABLE III-15

The Relationship of the Use of Objective Pronouns in Plural Subjects to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
TA	100.0%	1/1	3	4	-1	10	M	15
BT	100.0	1/1	3	1	-3	8	F	9
EJ	50.0	1/2	3	3	-1	10	M	8
DG	33.3	1/3	3	3	-2	8	M	--
ME	33.3	1/3	1	3	+1	10	F	9

In conclusion, the feature may well be a significantly occurring item in the West Dayton BEV speech community, but its limited occurrence in writing relegates it to a nonsignificant position in this study.

Direct question word order in embedded questions:

Most studies of the Black English Vernacular mention the existence of direct question word order in indirect or embedded questions. For example, Labov et al state in their 1968 study (296) "we find a very large number of sentences in which the inverted order is used while SE [Standard English] uses the non inverted order,"[86] and Fasold and Wolfram (1970:79) write "In Negro dialect . . . the inverted form of the question is used for both direct and indirect questions and the words <u>if</u> and <u>whether</u> are not used to form indirect yes-no questions."

There is no doubt that this syntactic pattern exists also in the vernacular of the Dayton informants, who wrote sequences like the following:

> He ask me what class was I coming from. (PM)
> Let me tell you what is money. (MB)
> You do not have to ask anyone can you go out. (MJ)
> I don't know what is the end of my dream. (EJ)
> I asked her did she want a ride. (TA)
> They fix tests just to see have you review the lesson. (EJ)

There is a problem, however, in defining what the potential number of occurrences of this feature is. For it is at times debatable whether a particular structure is or is not an embedded question. For example, do the following sequences contain an embedded question or not?

> he knows how much he learn. (DG)
> let me see what you have (CB)
> I didn't care what other significance they had (TA)

Further, it is unclear which verbs permit the inverted order to occur. Labov et al note, for example, that "there is some latitude as to which verbs contain the [+Q] which permits the inverted form to follow." (1968:298) They cite ask, wonder, and inquire as verbs containing this [+Q] and also give examples of inverted embedded questions following a number of other verbs, namely see, decide, tell, and know.[87]

If I include all the debatable embedded questions, such as those cited above, and do not limit the occurrence of embedded questions to particular verbs, there are 212 embedded questions written by the Dayton informants; 27 of these (12.7%) occurred with inverted word order and 5 more occurred with the verb omitted; the other 180 were written with noninverted word order. However, if I limit the count of potential occurrences of embedded questions to structures involving only certain verbs, the percentage of inverted word-order clauses rises significantly. The question of what constitutes an embedded question therefore becomes crucial in determining the significance of the feature.

One way of doing this is to allow the data itself to define the limits of its occurrence; that is, to observe which verbs are involved in the inverted word-order examples and to assume that these verbs are the

only ones which permit inverted word order to follow. The most common verb by far is ask; in fact 12 of the 27 inverted word-order clauses are preceded by the verb ask. Related forms include wonder (e.g. "wondering . . . did they wash their hands") and the structure answer the question in "answer the question of what effect does society have." Of the other verbs cited by Labov et al, tell precedes three inverted word-order clauses; see precedes one, and don't know precedes one. Decide does not occur, but figure in the sense of decide occurs one time (e.g. "so does a coach figure what is the best way"). The other seven clauses with inverted word order involve learning or understanding or desiring to know:[88]

> you get a broader spectrum . . . about what is reality and what is not (TA)
> I learned a lot about myself, . . . like what is loneness (CH)
> If I had had composition in high school rather than what is a verb or noun (FI)
> The main concern about dating that upsets many parents is where are you going, what time is it over, and when will you be back. (MJ)

The 27-28 inverted word-order examples all share one basic supposition, and that is "uncertainty" or "lack of knowledge."[89] Tell, for example, is used, not in the sense of "relating" or "talking about," but in the sense of "explaining what is not known": e.g. "tell us what is your job" and "tell us . . . what part does the matador has [sic]." Similarly, know occurs only in conjunction with a negative; that is, where knowledge is lacking;

e.g. "I don't know what is the end," and see occurs, not with the meaning of "looking at" but with the meaning of "finding out" or "learning what is not known"; e.g. "to see have you review the lesson."

Thus, if I limit the number of potential occurrences of inverted word-order clauses to only those that are preceded by verbs which carry this implication of "uncertainty" or "lack of knowledge," I get the following numbers and percentages: For all 42 Dayton informants there were 28 occurrences of inverted word order out of a potential 184^{90} occurrences (15.2%). For the 16 informants who showed the variation between inverted and noninverted word order, the mean percentage of occurrence of inverted word-order clauses was 24.6% (28 out of 114 occurrences).

The feature does not correlate with socioeconomic class. Status levels range widely for the 16 informants. The mean levels are 2.44 in 1960 and 2.88 in 1972, both very near the mean. The mobility pattern is similar; the mean is -0.3. Five of the informants had upward mobility; 2 were static; the others had downward mobility. The mean racial isolation index for the 16 is 8.5, which is somewhat above the norm. The mean ACT score was slightly lower than the norm: 9.2. Most scores were low, but three were among the highest for the entire Dayton group. Thus the feature cannot be said to correlate strongly with any of these factors.

TABLE III-16

The Relationship of the Use of Inverted Word Order in Embedded Questions to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	66.7%	2/3*	3	3	-1	10	M	8
MJ	55.6	5/9	2	5	+3	7	F	5
CM	50.0	3/6	2	3	-1	7	F	17
DG	50.0	1/2	3	3	-2	8	M	--
TA	36.4	4/11	3	4	-1	10	M	15
DJ	33.3	1/3	3	3	+4	2	F	19
FI	28.6	2/7	2	3	+3	9	F	5
MB	28.6	2/7	3	1	-5	10	F	9
ME	16.7	1/6	1	3	+1	10	F	9
BD	16.7	1/6*	4	3	-3	9	F	8
FJ	16.7	1/6	3	3	-1	9	M	8
RE	14.3	1/7	2	1	+1	10	F	8
AD	14.3	1/7	2	2	-1	8	F	6
PM	12.5	1/8	1	1	-2	8	F	6
CB	11.1	1/9	4	5	0	9	F	6
CH	5.9	1/17	1	3	0	10	M	9

*These two individuals are responsible for the **three** sentences not counted because the verbs in the embedded clauses were deleted. See footnote **88.**

Regarding the factor of sex, females greatly outnumber males; among the 16, 11 are females and 5 are males. However, the mean percentage of occurrence of the BEV variant is very similar for the two groups; for the males the mean is 23.1% (9 out of 39 potential occurrences); for the females the mean is 25.3% (19 out of 75 potential occurrences.) Therefore sex also does not appear to correlate with the feature.

I did not attempt to do a computer analysis of the embedded question variable because the actual number of tokens is quite limited. There are, however, certain obvious constraints which I can point out.

Of primary importance is the kind of verb preceding the embedded clause. Apparently verbs of asking, questioning or wondering are most likely to precede inverted word-order clauses, and ask itself is most common among these verbs.[91] In the Dayton data, among the 16 individuals with variation between direct and indirect word order, 12 out of 19 times (63.2%) the verb preceding the inverted word order was ask. No other verb parallels this percentage.

Another probable factor in the occurrence of inverted word-order clauses is whether the clause is a yes-no question or a Wh-question. There is some evidence (although percentage differences are not great) that Wh-questions occur more frequently with inverted word

order than yes-no questions; 25.9% of the potential Wh-questions involved inverted word order, whereas 21.2% of the yes-no questions did so. Furthermore, only six people wrote yes-no questions with inverted word order, whereas 15 wrote Wh-questions with inverted word order.[92]

A third possible constraint on the use of inverted word order concerns which verb appears in the embedded clause. It seems that the various inflected forms of _be_ were more likely to occur in inverted word order clauses than other verbs; some form of _be_ occurred in no less than 15 of the 28 sentences with inverted word order, and _be_ was particularly common in Wh-questions.[93]

Before concluding this section on embedded questions, I will comment briefly on several other types of embedding problems evidenced in the Dayton data. Primary among these are embedded commands. The vernacular pattern is similar to that for embedded questions;[94] that is, inverted word order, which is characteristic of direct commands appears also in indirect or embedded commands. Examples include the following:[95]

> Everyone told me if I wanted to carry a couple more hours take this religion course. (ME)
> People have to learn . . . that when a young man or lady becomes of age, stop treating that person like a five year old. (CR)
> You must have a outgoing attitude . . . and don't get discouraged. (EJ)
> He told me to watch my speed and don't go over the speed limit. (LJ)

> The way to solved the problem is for the white man Free Black Man and tell about they past and don't try to stop there future.[96] (PM)

Furthermore, in addition to these embedded commands there is other evidence that the rules for embedding in BEV are generally different from embedding rules in other dialects of English. Thus, the Dayton informants wrote structures like the following:

> I cannot have anyone working for me with long hair and do not wear shoes. (MB)
> Not only is it [prejudice] to be named the first American indian to ever direct a great play but to be a jew and can't play a leading role in it. (JC)
> He first have to be accept as a man person and can make decision and can reasons. (EJ)
> [She] had a pleasant personality, easy to get along and also helping in anyway she can. (BD)

I have made no attempt to count or even to figure out a way to count the potential occurrences of these various kinds of embedded structures, so that I cannot accurately measure the significance of the vernacular embedding rules. It is apparent, however, that the pattern so often observed as characteristic of embedded questions in BEV is simply part of a large pattern of higher level rules which apply to many kinds of embedded structures.

Hypercorrections:

Several of the linguistic features which I have studied may be considered hypercorrections. The assumption is that they result from an imperfect learning of a Standard English grammatical rule, which leads to an extension of that rule into environments where the rule is not actually applied by SE speakers. For example, Fasold and Wolfram cite the use of the s suffix on verbs with non-third singular subjects as evidence of "a partial learning of the grammar rules of a different dialect." (1970:65)

In this study of the Dayton informants, five features can be identified as examples of hypercorrection. These include the use of s as a plural marker on irregular nouns, the use of are for is as a singular verb, the use of were for was as a singular verb, the use of an before consonants, and the use of s as a present tense verb marker on plural verbs.

Irregular noun plurals with s:

In their discussion of various linguistic features characteristic of BEV speakers, Fasold and Wolfram (1970:78-79) remark that Black Vernacular speakers "may add the s suffix to the irregular plural (peoples, childrens)." They hypothesize that at "an earlier stage

of Negro dialect" when the noun plural category was not a regular "part of the grammar . . . speakers tended to add the -s suffix to words which were already pluralized in an irregular way. These doubly pluralized words became fossilized and are preserved to the present." (1970:79) Labov et al have also noted the practice of adding s to irregular nouns among Harlem informants. They state that its use "is especially common among adults" and particularly point out that "it is natural to observe many examples of peoples in [their] texts." (1968:168)

Among the Dayton informants there were only seven occurrences of irregular noun plurals which ended in s. This was out of a potential 564, which gives a percentage of only 1.2% for the 42 informants. The forms feets and childrens occurred once each. The other irregular plurals with s were all the word peoples. No one, however, used the form peoples more frequently than people.

There were only four individuals who wrote the seven forms with s. The socioeconomic status of these four was above the norm in 1960; the mean was 2.75; but for 1972 the mean was below the norm--2.5. Their mobility was also downward; the mean for the four was -2. Their racial isolation indexes were high, with a mean of 8.8, and they had all attended all-black high schools

Their ACT scores were low; the mean was 7.3. All of these extra-linguistic factors show some correlation with the use of s on irregular noun plurals. However, they must not be taken too seriously because means based on so few individuals are not reliable.

Sex, on the other hand, seemed not to be a factor in the use of s with irregular nouns. The four informants were equally divided regarding sex. One male (EJ), however, was responsible for four the seven forms. His percentage of +s on irregular plurals was 10.2; the others had percentages below 5. Such low percentages indicate that the feature is of little importance for any of the informants.

TABLE III-17

The Relationship of Irregular Noun Plurals With s to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	10.2%	4/39	3	3	-1	10	M	8
BD	6.3	1/16	4	3	-3	9	F	8
PM	4.6	1/22	1	1	-2	8	F	6
DG	4.3	1/23	3	3	-2	8	M	--

Third singular are:

My findings regarding the use of singular are agree with those of Labov et al in New York, who write "NNE speakers do occasionally say they is, but almost

never say he are." (1968:221) The Dayton informants used are as a third singular verb very rarely; there were 14 instances out of a potential 1,444 occurrences (1,385 occurrences excluding deleted forms). This is an occurrence of only one percent.

Most of the instances of third singular are occurred in sentences where the verb was some distance away from the true subject but adjacent to a plural noun phrase--either a preceding phrase which was a modifier of the subject or a following plural predicate nominative. Typical examples included the following: "If this drug addict like others are ready" and "One of the best things that has happened to schools are rap sessions."

Ten individuals (6 females and 4 males) wrote the 14 singular are sentences. Most of them wrote are for is only once, and most of them were also writers of plural is (three, however, were not). The item was not typical of individuals at any particular status level; the means were below the norm for both years: in 1960, 2.1 and in 1972, 2.4. Mobility indexes of those who wrote are for is were generally, but not exclusively, downward; the mean was -1. ACT scores reflect the same pattern, being generally but not exclusively low; the mean was 9.3. Racial isolation indexes were high for most of the ten informants (the mean was 8.6), but again there were exceptions.

TABLE III-18

The Relationship of Third Singular *are* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#*	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
DL	8.3%	1/12	2	2	-1	9	F	10
WM	6.7	2/30	3	3	-1	6	M	11
ED	6.7	1/15	4	4	-1	8	M	8
MB	4.7	3/64	3	1	-5	10	F	9
EJ	3.8	1/26	3	3	-1	10	M	8
HJ	3.0	1/33	2	3	+1	9	F	14
CH	2.4	1/41	1	3	0	10	M	9
ME	2.0	1/51	1	3	+1	10	F	9
WS	1.5	2/137	1	1	-1	6	F	--
PM	1.4	1/72	1	1	-2	8	F	6

*Total potential occurrences do not include deleted forms.

Because of the low incidence of third singular *are* for the group as a whole and especially its low percentage of occurrence among those who did write it occasionally (always less than 10% occurrence), the item has little significance and appears to be a typical hypercorrection.

Singular *were*:

Were as a singular verb was even less common than *are*. In the third singular *were* occurred only six times out of a possible 855 occurrences (845 excluding the 10

deleted forms). Two of these six were apparent subjunctives ("if there were no snow" and "it looked as if it were a sea of blackness"), which leaves only four occurrences out of a possible 843, or 0.5% third singular indicative _were_. Similarly, there were five occurrences of first singular _were_ (e.g. "I were told"), two of which were subjunctives; this leaves three occurrences out of a possible 253, or 1.2% first singular indicative _were_.

The fact that there were so few people who wrote singular _were_ (5) and that they used it so infrequently (never more than 6% of the time) suggests that apparent correlations between _were_ and the extra-linguistic variables must not be weighed too heavily. With this in mind, the mean socioeconomic status in 1960 for the five individuals who wrote singular _were_ was at the norm (2.4), but slightly below the norm in 1972 (2.6). Mobility varied from -3 to +4; the mean was upward (+0.8). Racial isolation indexes also varied (the mean was 8), and ACT scores were generally low (the mean was 9.3). Sex is not a factor; two females and three males wrote the 7 forms. The two females and one of the males were also frequent writers of plural _was_. The use of singular _were_ is therefore apparently a reflection of their uncertainty about the standard use of _were_; in other words, singular _were_ is also a typical hypercorrection of little significance.

TABLE III-19

The Relationship of Singular *were* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#* 3rdsg.	#/Pot.#* 1stsg.	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
LJ	5.6%	1/28	1/8	2	3	+3	5	F	13
PH	4.2	1/22	0/2	1	1	--	--	M	--
EJ	3.2	0/27	1/4	3	3	-1	10	M	8
BD	2.8	1/52	1/19	4	3	-3	9	F	8
CR	2.6	1/25	0/13	2	3	+4	8	M	8

*Totals exclude subjunctives and deleted forms.

an before consonants:

The occurrence of *an* as an indefinite article before consonants was also quite rare among the Dayton informants, but the item is of interest because of its relationship with the incidence of *a* before vowels. There were 23 occurrences of *an* before a consonant out of a possible 2129[97] (1.1%). Eleven people (6 females and 5 males) wrote these 23 examples. For three of these people (GD, RW, and CH) the item appears to have some significance, though not a great deal.

The relationship of socioeconomic status, mobility, and racial isolation indexes to the occurrence of *an* before consonants is interesting. The range of SES in 1960 reflects the usual breadth from 1 to 4, averaging 2.36; in 1972, most (7 of the 11) individuals have an

SES ranking of 3; the mean is 2.91. Mobility indexes are more upward than downward; the mean is +0.5. Thus mobility shows some correlation with the use of hypercorrect *an*. Racial isolation indexes are only slightly lower than the norm, however; the mean is 7.6. ACT scores average exactly at the norm (9.8). Thus only mobility shows correlation with the use of hypercorrect *an*; the other extra-linguistic factors do not.

TABLE III-20

The Relationship of *an* Before Consonants to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#*	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
GD	11.6%	5/43	2	4	+1	10	F	12
RW	10.3	4/39	4	5	+1	7	M	3
CH	9.4	5/53	1	3	0	10	M	9
CS	4.4	2/45	3	3	+4	5	M	9
HJ	3.2	1/31	2	3	+1	9	F	14
CR	1.8	1/57	2	3	+4	8	M	8
DJ	1.7	1/59	3	3	+4	2	F	19
DG	1.6	1/61	3	3	-2	8	M	--
PJ	1.2	1/83	1	1	-3	8	F	10
PM	1.2	1/85	1	1	-2	8	F	6
BD	1.0	1/99	4	3	-3	9	F	8

*Totals exclude deleted forms.

Of more interest linguistically is the fact that the use of an before a consonant is apparently favored by the co-occurrence of certain other environmental factors. The most influential of these is a following h (e.g. "an hypnotising effect" and "an homemaker"). Of wider significance, however, an before a consonant is also favored by the same syntactic environments as a before vowels; that is, an is most likely to occur before a compound or noun adjunct (e.g. "an coat rack"), less likely to occur before an adjectival (e.g. "an religious background"), and least likely to occur before a noun functioning as headword in its noun phrase (e.g. "an D or F"). For example, when I examined the use of an before consonants by the three informants GD, RW, and CH, I found that an before a headword occurred 4.5% of the time; before an adjectival it occurred 12.1% of the time; and before a compound or noun adjunct it occurred 28.6% of the time. This is strikingly parallel to the relationship of these same syntactic factors in the case of a before vowels: 18.8% a before a headword; 41.1% a before an adjectival; 70% a before a compound or noun adjunct. The very existence of this pattern suggests something very important; that is, hypercorrect an is not "sporadic" or "random"; there is system to its occurrence; it is rule-governed.

Third plural verbs ending in s:

Of all the assumed hypercorrect features, the use of s with third plural verbs[98] was most common, most frequent and most predictable; it was more like the other Black Vernacular features than the other hypercorrections in that a rather large number of individuals used it, its percentage of occurrence was quite high, and the environments which favored its use were easily discernible.

In all, there were 634 third plural present verbs; 63 (9.9%) of these ended in s. Twenty-two individuals wrote the 63 forms; 10 were males and 12 were females. Although the mean for males and females was nearly the same (see the discussion of the Cedergren/Sankoff run below), it is significant that the two individuals with the highest percentages of +s (53.8 and 42.8%)--that is, those for whom the s ending was in strong competition with the zero ending--were females. In fact the majority of those who evidenced a high percentage of third plural verbs ending in s were females. Sex, therefore, may be a factor in its use.

The socioeconomic status of those 22 who used third plural verbs with s ranged widely and averaged 2.5 in 1960 and 2.68 in 1972. Mobility also varied from the lowest rank (-5) to the highest (+4) but was generally downward; the mean was -0.2. Similarly, racial isolation indexes ranged widely; the mean was 7.9 There was some

TABLE III-21

The Relationship of Third Plural s Presence to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	%	#/Pot.#	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT	School
CM	53.8%	7/13	2	3	-1	7	F	17	I
CL	42.9	3/7	2	2	0	10	F	--	B
PH	33.3	1/3	1	1	--	--	M	--	B
BT	28.6	2/7	3	1	-3	8	F	9	I
JW	25.0	7/28	4	2	-3	10	M	14	B
LJ	25.0	2/8	2	3	+3	5	F	13	I
CB	21.7	5/23	4	5	0	9	F	6	B
EJ	20.8	5/24	3	3	-1	10	M	8	B
ME	19.0	4/21	1	3	+1	10	F	9	B
DG	18.2	4/22	3	3	-2	8	M	--	B
WM	15.8	3/19	3	3	-1	6	M	11	I
MB	13.5	5/37	3	1	-5	10	F	9	B
MJ	11.8	2/17	2	5	+3	7	F	5	B
CH	11.8	2/17	1	3	0	10	M	9	B
DJ	10.0	1/10	3	3	+4	2	F	19	I
BD	9.5	2/21	4	3	-3	9	F	8	B
FJ	7.4	2/27	3	3	-1	9	M	8	B
ED	7.1	1/14	4	4	-1	8	M	8	I
CS	5.6	1/18	3	3	+4	5	M	9	I
PM	4.7	2/43	1	1	-2	8	F	6	B
CR	4.3	1/23	2	3	+4	8	M	8	B
WS	1.8	1/55	1	1	-1	6	F	--	I

indication, however, that those who had attended integrated high schools had a greater tendency to use third plural verbs ending in s (19.1%) than those who had attended all-black schools (14.4%). The significance of this tendency was tested by including school type as a factor in the Cedergren/Sankoff rule analysis program (see below). ACT scores were similar to the socioeconomic variables in their wide distribution, from a low of 5 to a high of 19; the mean was at the norm, 9.8.

The third plural verb ending in s did not therefore appear to correlate with any of the extra-linguistic variables with the possible exception of sex and school type.

Running the data on the Cedergren/Sankoff program, however, did indicate which linguistic environments most favored the use of s with third plural verbs. The factor groups which I selected for this analysis were the following:

Group I: Preceding syntactic environment

S = Singular noun
R = Relative pronoun
O = Other[99]

Group II: Type of Verb

H = Have
D = Do
A = Any other[100]

Group III: Sex of writer

M = Male
F = Female

Group IV: Type of high school of writer

B = Black
I = Integrated

These factor groups allowed a possibility for 36 environments. The data filled 31 of these. The non-applications probabilities model of the program assigned the following weights to these various factors: ($X^2 = 28.22$) ($p_o = 0.05$)

S = 0.26; R = 0.21; O = 0.0
H = 0.15; D = 0.0; A = 0.09
M = 0.0; F = 0.04
B = 0.0; I = 0.06

It is clear that the most influential factor in the use of s with third plural verbs is a preceding singular noun (e.g. "the characters of the movie starts with the alien" and "rejection and failure walks hand and hand"). In this respect these verbs paralleled the use of is as a plural. But in other respects these other verbs differed. Plural is, for example, was favored when people was the subject; this was not true for other verbs, although verbs ending in s did sometimes occur with people as the subject; e.g. "people goes to school." On the other hand, the use of the s suffix with these verbs, and especially have (i.e. has), was favored by the co-occurrence of a relative pronoun as subject (e.g. "things that has been pressuring him"). This was not true for is.

The sex factor came out very similar for is and the other verbs; that is, the use of s forms was favored, but only slightly, by the writer's being female. The computer analysis also shows that the s form was favored

slightly when the writer had attended an integrated school. But because these extra-linguistic factors--sex and school type--seemed to have so little effect on the use of s with plural verbs, I reran the program without these factor groups. The non-applications probabilities model assigned the following weights to the various features (all 9 environments were filled):

(p_o = 0.10)

S = 0.26; R = 0.21; O = 0.0
H = 0.15; D = 0.0; A = 0.07

The observed vs. expected frequencies of the nine environments were as follows: (X^2 = 4.93)

Env.	Obs.	Exp.	Env.	Obs.	Exp.
HS	1/6	2.61	AS	6/14	5.34
HR	5/16	6.30	AR	8/21	7.05
HO	12/44	10.36	AO	24/153	24.77
DS	1/1	0.34			
DR	1/3	0.87			
DO	2/22	2.25	Total	60/280[101]	

The main conclusions reached after the previous computer run still hold: a preceding singular noun is the environment which favored most the use of s with third plural verbs; a relative pronoun subject also favored the use of s; the irregular verb have (in contrast with the irregular verb do) favored the use of s also.[102] The residual category A (i.e. any verb other than be, have, or do) showed some slight effect on the rule. This could mean either that there were particular verbs other than have which favored the use of s, or

more likely that there were certain phonetic environments (perhaps a final nasal or nasal cluster) that favored the use of s. I did not, however, systematically investigate these possibilities.

In conclusion, regarding the assumption that the s suffix on plural verbs is a hypercorrection, the relationship of the use of the s suffix on plural verbs with the use of the zero ending on third singular verbs is not clear. It certainly is not the case that only people having a high percentage of third singular verbs without s were those who wrote third plural verbs with s. Although several of these people (notably EJ, BD, ED, and PM--all of whom had more than 75% third singular verbs without s) had some instances of plural verbs with s, there were other individuals with significant percentages of third plural verbs ending in s (JW, LJ, both with 25%, and MJ with 11.8%) who never once wrote a third singular verb without s.

Also it is significant that the s suffix was not "sporadically used with present tense verbs with subjects other than third person singular" (Fasold and Wolfram 1970:64). It was in fact almost completely lacking on first and second person plural verbs, and in the third person plural it occurred only once when the pronoun they was the subject. The plural s suffix was therefore

quite restricted in the environments in which it occurred; it seemed definitely to be governed by certain environmental constraints. In addition, its overall percentage of occurrence was quite high; it was ten times more common than the other hypercorrect features. I cannot therefore agree with Fasold's conclusions that "hyper s is as much a violation of Black English rules as it is of the rules of Standard English" (1972:133). The incidence of the third plural s seems very much to be a regular part of at least some Black speakers' vernacular.

In conclusion to this section on hypercorrection, all of the hypercorrect features were rare in the Dayton data with the exception of the s plural verb marker. It is also true that an before consonants was more widely used (that is by more informants) than the singular uses of are or were or the use of s on irregular nouns, but none of these four features was characterized by the extensive use that is characteristic of the s suffix added to third plural verbs. Furthermore, only the use of third plural s had any apparent significance for more than two or three people, and therefore only its use stands out among the hypercorrections as being a regular, common feature of the Dayton Black Vernacular.

Non-interrogative which:

One lexical item which I have studied is the word which. Its use among the Dayton informants, both as a relative and a nonrelative, is quite interesting.

When it is not functioning as an interrogative, which is commonly used in all varieties of English as a relative pronoun. In this function which is in competition with who (whom, whose), that, and ∅ (the zero relative).[103] The writing of the 42 Dayton informants shows the following distribution of these various forms as relative pronouns:

	Ref. to persons		Ref. to things, etc.		Total %
	#	%	#	%	
which	8	2.6%	163	22.9%	16.7%
who[104]	185	59.5%	1	0.1%	18.2%
that	83	26.7%	291	40.9%	36.6%
∅	35	11.3%	256	36.0%	28.5%[105]
	311	100.1%	711	99.9%	100.0%

It is apparent that which was less frequently used as a relative than any of the other forms despite the fact that, in contrast with ∅ and usually that, which can be used in both restrictive and non-restrictive clauses. It is also obvious that as a pronoun referring to persons--a usage which is generally labeled nonstandard (See, for example, Perrin and Ebbitt 1972:262)--which was quite rare, occurring only 8 times in the writing

of only 4 informants (e.g. "a good teacher which try hard to help her students"). One individual (EJ) was responsible for 5 of these 8 sentences.

A number of informants exhibited other kinds of difficulty with relative which which may be related to different embedding rules for BEV. (See the discussion on pp. 175-176 of this chapter.) Most common was the use of which with redundant in (e.g. "the world in which they will some day be a part of" and "the subject in which you are going to spend the greatest deal of time with"). Perhaps this kind of redundant construction is a hypercorrection related to the fact that the phrase in which frequently occurs as an alternative for the simple relative that; for example, "the way in which/ that they communicate" and "the manner in which/that the words are spoken." The apparent converse of this construction (that is, the use of that for preposition + which) occurred a couple of times in the data: "the band that I am a member" and "a tape recorder that you can record its feelings." There were also several instances of which with a redundant noun phrase, as in "I am also taking Music 112, which I think it will be enjoyable and challenging."

One female (BD) exhibited a complete unfamiliarity with the standard uses of which. She used which only

twice in all her writing (out of 46 relative clauses). In one of her sentences which appears without an antecedent or perhaps as a substitute for what: "Some teachers like to pick on student for which they older brother or sister done to them" The other sentence used both that and which where either but not both would be appropriate: " . . . the school that which I attended." Another student (the same one who used which 5 out of 8 times to refer to persons) also used which as a substitute for complementizer that: "Black people carries a attitude which they are misuse" and "His wish was granted which he never grow old."

In addition to these individualized uses of which, the word was also used by three persons as a conjunction similar in meaning to while or whereas: "It takes them . . . a very short time to figure out very hard problems which when we were young it might have took us 3 or 4 days" and "My father did find time for us to [o]. Which most black father has no time for his kids" and "Now black people can marry white people which before the Civil Rights Bill was passed the Black man couldn't stared at a white woman going down the street." I suspect that this latter use of which is fairly common among Black speakers, for it appears a number of times on tape-recorded interviews which R. Terrebonne and I have collected from

Black speakers in the Dayton area; for example, one female said, "It does challenge you, which most the time I'm not challenge in college," and "She gave me a D, which, you know, I never had a D." This use of which is then of particular interest because it is an extension of the use of which into new territory.

The socioeconomic status of the informants who experienced difficulty with the use of which or who used it in new ways, was above the norm for both 1960 and 1972. The mean for 1960 was 2.75; for 1972 it was 3.42. Mobility indexes ranged from a low of -5 to a high of +3; the mean was -0.3, very near the norm. Racial isolation indexes were high (8 or above), for all but two informants; the mean was 8.7. ACT English scores were low for all but one informant (TA), and the mean score was 8.8, considerably below the norm.

Although the redundant in and redundant noun phrases with which were written by both males and females, three of the four informants who used which to refer to persons were males. Furthermore, three of the four conjunctive which examples were written by males also. Sex may therefore be a factor in the use of which.

TABLE III-22

The Relationship of the Use of Non-interrogative *which* to Extra-linguistic Factors

Inf.	Non-Reltv.	Reltv.*	SES 60	72	Mob.	Rac.Is.	Sex	ACT
EJ	4	5/17	3	3	-1	10	M	8
WM	1	0/0	3	3	-1	6	M	11
CB	1	0/3	4	5	0	9	F	6
TA	0	3/23	3	4	-1	10	M	15
BD	0	2/2	4	3	-3	9	F	8
DL	0	2/6	2	2	-1	9	F	10
ME	0	2/7	1	3	+1	10	F	9
PD	0	1/2	3	2	-5	9	M	5
MW	0	1/4	2	2	0	9	M	8
MJ	0	1/4	2	5	+3	7	F	5
CR	0	1/4	2	3	+4	8	M	8
HS	0	1/7	4	6	+1	8	M	11

*The third column gives the number of deviant uses of relative *which* vs. the total number of times the individual used relative *which*. By "deviant" is meant those in which *which* is used to refer to persons as well as those involving redundancies.

In total the number of deviant uses of non-interrogative *which* was 26, 14.7% of all its occurrences. The difficulties with redundancies and the use of *which* for *that* may be hypercorrections rather than reflections of common use among speakers of the Black English Vernacular. It is difficult to say, however, in the absence of

comparative data from other areas, just what the significance of the use of which is in the Black Vernacular.[106] But there is no question that which enjoys a broader use among these Dayton informants than among most (if not all) Standard English speakers.

NOTES

CHAPTER III

[1]I am always mindful, however, of the fact that the results I have found in the written data of the Dayton informants (particularly regarding percentages of occurrence) are quite naturally going to be different from the results reported in previous studies of spoken styles of BEV.

[2]See the Appendix (p. 269) for the abbreviations used to refer to these factors in the various tables throughout this chapter.

[3]It is important to remember that these figures refer to the BEV feature itself, only when I am citing non-applications model probabilities. When I refer, as I sometimes do, to applications model probabilities, the numbers represent the examples in which the feature did not occur. Thus, as a hypothetical example, if the numbers to the left in column 2 referred to applications model probabilities, they would represent the number of times an, not a, occurred.

[4]Deletion of /t/ and /d/ from monomorphemes was a quite rare phenomenon among the Dayton informants. This statement appears to contradict one of the major findings of those who have previously studied /-t,d/ deletion, which is that deletion is more common for monomorphemic than for bimorphemic clusters. The reason for this apparent discrepancy is quite obvious however--as obvious as the fact that I am analyzing writing here, not speaking. Literate speakers rarely spell common words in ways that they have never seen in print; for example, they do not write "jus" or "juss" for "just" though they may pronounce the word [dʒɛs]. They simply learn that the spelling -st sometimes represents the sound [s].

[5]Percentages of d absence for the past tense and the past participle were identical; there was 14.5% d absence (156 out of 1073 instances) in the past tense and 14.5% d absence (181 out of 1245 occurrences) among past participles.

[6]One of CR's d deletions was grammatically ambiguous;

that is, it is unclear whether the form "gain" is a past tense verb or a participle: "With all that I gone through, gain, I can say now that statement."

[7]This constraint is of course irrelevant for my analysis since I am analyzing only bimorphemic clusters.

[8]Fasold's use of the symbol C in parentheses is a result of the fact that he lumps all non-vocalic environments together; that is, (C) here represents both a following consonant and a following pause, since he found these two environments to behave similarly. I discuss this further on pages 68 and 69.

[9]Initially I subdivided the following consonantal environment into true consonants and glides. The glide category included /w/ and /y/ as well as /h/. These glides did not appear, however, to have any significantly different effect on d absence than the other consonants; that is, they did not--as might be expected--act more like vowels than the other consonants. This is particularly surprising in the case of /h/, which included, among other words, 17 examples of him, his, and her--words which very likely are pronounced without the [h]. However, 10 of these 17 examples involved d deletion. A following /h/ did not therefore appear to inhibit deletion as following vowels do, but rather to promote it.

[10]Following "Consonant" here includes /d/, /t/, /ð/, and /θ/ as well as all other consonants. I included these supposedly neutralized consonants with the others after verifying that a following d or t or th did not favor d deletion any more than other consonants. There were in fact 153 instances of the potential suffix -d being followed by either d, t, or th; 75 of these (49%) appeared without the -d. (Cf. 50.9% total preconsonantal d deletion.) This is perhaps the most surprising result to come out of the /-t,d/ deletion analysis. Certainly we would expect for the d to be lost more frequently in such expressions as tried to or happened that, but this was not the case, with the exception of the two sequences use(d) to and suppose(d) to, which involved d deletion 73% of the time (11 out of 15 cases).

[11]It is important to emphasize that my use of pre-pausal in writing means simply pre-terminal pause. That is, I counted as pre-pausal the last participle in the following sequence, but not the previous two, although one of them precedes a comma: "The floors are . . . mopped, polished and wax." Therefore the differences

between Fasold's and my results in this area may be due to the necessarily different definitions of pause in writing as opposed to speech.

[12]I excluded the verb ask(ed) from this analysis for two reasons: 1) it is unclear whether the spelling represents a preceding fricative or stop ([æks] or [æsk]); 2) this particular verb had a high incidence of d deletion (63.2%--12 out of 19 occurrences), which might skew the data.

[13]This total excludes the verb be as well as a few possibly subjunctive forms; e.g. "I concluded . . . by requesting that he try to graduate."

[14]Four individuals who wrote 5 forms without the s have not been included in the analysis which follows because the forms without s were verbs which ended in "-sC clusters." Labov et al note that "final -sts, -sps, -sks present special difficulties for NNE [i. e. BEV] speakers. These clusters are literally unpronounceable for most individuals" (1968:131). In other words, the absence of the s suffix from such words as risks, consists, and tastes is due to a phonological rule rather than a grammatical rule. In any case, there were very few such verbs in my data. Among the 25 informants, there were only 7 examples, 6 of which appeared without the s. These verbs I did not therefore include in the analysis of phonological constraints (see pp. 87-91), for it is an obvious fact that "-sC clusters" favor s absence more than any other factor and to statistically analyze them is redundant and unnecessary.

[15]The mean percentages of s absence which Wolfram reports for upper-middle class, lower-middle class, upper-working class, and lower-working class Blacks are as follows: UM = 1.4; LM = 9.7; UW = 56.9; LW = 71.4. (1969:136)

[16]Not counted were two instances of deleted have/has; e.g. "something that really been on my mind."

[17]Further discussion of both have and do appears on pp. 84-87.

[18]"Non-strident consonant" here excludes "-sC clusters."

[19]All these 74 verbs are included in Thorndike's list of the 500 most frequent words in the language. (Thorndike and Lorge 1944:270-272)

[20]Of course the percentages which Fasold reports for the Washington, D. C. informants are considerably higher than the percentages for the Dayton informants. This difference is no doubt primarily a reflection of the difference between speech and writing. Our findings are in agreement, however, in that in both studies s absence was more common for regular verbs than for have, and in both studies don't was used significantly more often than regular verbs with a third person singular subject.

[21]I am assuming that Fasold's term "Regular Verb" excludes do and don't. In my figures these verbs are excluded.

[22]The term "auxiliary" here includes have/has to; e.g. "the family has to listen."

[23]Again "-sC clusters" are not included. Preceding r is included here although separated from the other consonants later. See pp. 90-91. The verbs have/has and don't/doesn't are not included for the same reasons that Fasold gives. (1972:124)

[24]"Pause" is defined here, as in the discussion of /-t,d/ deletion, as pre-terminal pause only.

[25]Initially I grouped together only single sonorants but I soon discovered that the clusters of which r, l, and n were a part had the same effect as the sonorants by themselves.

[26]The fact that I am analyzing writing and not speech also affects the data. For example, it is impossible to determine in many cases whether the 's is present or absent since it is a quite common and acceptable practice in writing to delete the s at the end of a word already ending in s (e.g. Charles'). Thus, there is no way of measuring how often the /ɨz/ possessive allomorph was deleted. For this reason and because the total number of potential occurrences of the variable were few, I did not attempt a Cedergren/Sankoff analysis of possessive 's.

[27]Unfortunately, in several places Kessler's use of percentages is misleading, and consequently several of her conclusions are inaccurate. Some of these inaccuracies I discuss more fully on pp. 98-100.

[28]Their sample included 19 informants, 4 of whom (approximately 21%) used uninflected plurals. By comparison, in my data 28 of the 42 informants (almost 67%) had some s plural absence, though 13 of these had no significant amount. This leaves 15 of the 42 (approximately 36%) who evidenced a variable rule for the plural suffix.

[29]I have not included in these figures a number of forms which may indeed be plurals but which are syntactically ambiguous. The problem in deciding their number derives from the fact that they may be either singular generic nouns or plural nouns; e.g. "the idea of freedom . . . was denied the Negro by the Church" and "the European saw the brown-skin people of Africa as invisible."

[30]It may also represent /ɨz/. I discuss this on pp. 100-101.

[31]The total number of occurrences here is slightly lower than the figures on p. 97 because before running the Cedergren/Sankoff analyses I excluded certain occurrences which might either skew the data or which were ambiguous. For example, I excluded all instances of the word feeling(s), both in sentences like "my emotions and feeling have complete control over my thoughts" and sentences like "she has hurt their feeling" because of the very high incidence of feeling without s in the data of all informants; in all but one instance in fact the word appeared without the s. Thus feeling appears to be one of those nouns which, as Wolfram states, though "regularly taking -Z plural in SE [Standard English] . . . characteristically do not do so in NNE." (1969:145) Other examples of words omitted from the Cedergren/Sankoff analyses involved some unresolved ambiguity, which resulted in an inability to code the item. For example, one individual wrote "A new day is comeing and new people with new ideals." There is a question of whether the writer really intended the word ideals or whether he meant ideas; therefore I did not count the word for the computer analyses. Furthermore, the Cedergren/Sankoff analyses do not include "-sC clusters" (e.g. "one of the several test he gave" and "stop communist" and "built in desks") for reasons cited in footnote 14. In any case the latter were quite rare in the data--7 instances, 4 of which occurred without the final s.

[32]The lower percentage of s absence after c) may be slightly distorted by the fact that some possible plurals of this type were not included in the count.

See footnote 29. This of course would affect the probabilities of P and O in the computer analyses but probably not significantly, since the number of uncoded possible plurals was relatively low.

[33]I found that both an n directly preceding the potential s and an nC cluster had the same effect on s absence; that is, words like student(s), parent(s), amendment(s), were as likely to appear without the s as nation(s), decision(s), and person(s).

[34]For reasons of comparison with the other Cedergren/Sankoff programs I cite the applications model probabilities here despite the fact that for this particular run the total chi square for the non-applications model was slightly lower than the chi square for the applications model. It makes little difference that I do this with this run, however, since I later modified this program, and this run did not serve as the basis for the final ordering of the features or my conclusions regarding the constraints on this variable.

[35]However, regarding the extra-linguistic factor sex, Wolfram found that males were more likely to exhibit s absence than females. His percentages are so low however that the differences between the sexes are not great, and in the case of his lower-working class informants the difference is very small: males = 7.9% absence vs. females = 7.1% absence. (1969:149)

[36]By "unstressed" I mean a syllable with weakest stress. Syllables with secondary or tertiary stress I included among the stressed syllables. A few words were ambiguous in this respect and were excluded from the program; e.g. accident, program, sunday.

[37]I am indebted to R. Terrebonne for this second look and consequently for the resulting analysis.

[38]In other words, since the percentages indicate that liquids behaved like true vowels, I assume that the liquids have become vocalized; that is, they became off-glides. In at least one example there is even evidence that the liquids are indistinguishable from one another: "all my former [i.e. formals] are made."

[39]Wolfram himself did not measure the amount of adverbial s absence but merely mentioned the phenomenon in a footnote. Labov devoted less than one page to the item in the Harlem study.

[40]There are several individuals who evidenced noun plural s absence but who did not show any adverbial s absence (HJ, PD, CH, PH, DJ, and DG); however, two of these people had no potential adverbs ending in s and among the four others there were only 11 potential s forms. Therefore it is unwise to say that these individuals never use the adverbial forms without s; the data is just too limited to provide examples.

[41]These figures are based on Labov's Harlem study. An important exception is the Oscar Brothers, for whom the percentage of contraction and deletion was considerably lower than for the other teenage groups in "single style" interviews (75%); deletion alone constituted only 15% of the total for these informants. (1972a:84) Labov et al write of these informants, "Their use of NNE represents the first steps in the transition between adolescent culture and entry into the adult community." (1968:41) Thus they are the group from the Harlem study most comparable to the Dayton informants.

[42]The results reported in this section I obtained by the use of Labov's formulas for contraction and deletion; that is, $C = \frac{C + D}{F + C + D}$ and $D = \frac{D}{C + D}$. where C = contracted forms, D = deleted forms, and F = full forms. For another way of looking at deletion, as it pertains to writing, see the discussion which follows this section, pp. 115-116.

[43]There were a number of examples of deleted copula after expletive *there* and before a noun subject. These I included in the Cedergren/Sankoff analysis along with the pronoun subjects.

[44]"Pronoun" here includes the personal pronouns as well as the relatives *who*, *what*, and *that*, plus the indefinites (e.g. *everybody*). There were actually only 3 of the latter in all the data, 2 of which appeared with a zero copula; e.g. "he thinks nothing really wrong."

[45]*Gonna* (which was always written *going to*) was included in this category instead of being set aside as a separate entity, because there was too little data on *gonna* to warrant treating it separately.

[46]This generalization, which was true for all copulas taken together, did not hold for *is* and *are* when separated from *am*. For them there was no appreciable difference between a following noun or predicate

adjective, although a following verb did exert considerable restraint on contraction: V = 0.26; N = 0.0; A = 0.01.

[47]More than one student reported to me that they had been told by former English teachers to spell the word as 'am. Whether in fact this was true or simply a misunderstanding between students and teachers is not clear, but it is a fact that many English teachers, especially in our universities, penalize students for writing contractions. One I knew subtracted 5 points from every student's grade every time they used a contraction in a paper.

[48]Two of these ambiguities occurred after expletive there (e.g. "there at least 300 - 500 student"), and one occurred in a relative clause after that ("the students that coming"). Most likely all three represent deleted is.

[49]By "conservatively" I mean that I have not considered questionable cases, such as Zwicky's "The man I told you about that Jerry said he was going to send his review to's going to answer your question." (1970:331)

[50]One type of sentence which is not an example of potential deletions but which is included among the potentially deletable because I have no way of detecting the difference in writing is emphatic is, are, and am. For example, the sentence "I am a very determined young person" might be interpreted as including [æm] rather than [m], but I have no way to tell for certain.

[51]"Pronoun" is defined as above in footnote 44.

[52]There were actually nine instances of sentences with interrogative adverbs before potential is. In only one of these was is deleted ("this review let you know how the Nixon Administration feeling about Poverty"), and in this sentence the placement of is is ambiguous. These sentences with interrogative adverbs were not included in the Cedergren/Sankoff analysis because their limited number did not warrant setting up a special category for them.

[53]Included in the total number of potential occurrences of deletable is are instances after both nouns and pronouns (i.e. which) which end in sibilants. These include examples like "this is most likely," "college is just out to make money," and "which is against the law." I have included these primarily

on the basis of Labov's statement: "There are almost no contracted forms after sibilants, although contrary to the usual concept, a few can definitely be observed. But quite a few forms of *is* have apparently undergone both contraction and deletion after sibilants . . . . It appears that deletion is practically categorical after sibilants." (1972a:102) In my data there are only two examples of *is* deletion after a sibilant; both follow the subject *this*: "this the routine that [he] goes threw" and "I realize that this my own opinion." It is possible of course to consider such examples as a result of a kind of writing haplology rather than BEV interference. This is most likely the case with the second example written by an informant (CS) who evidenced very few BEV features in all his writing. In any case, I have not included the 81 *this* sentences nor the 8 *which* sentences in the Cedergren/Sankoff variable rule analysis, because I have serious doubts that these are examples of the same kind of *is/'s/Ø* variation as the other sentences which I have included.

[54]This figure of course reflects deletion after noun as well as pronoun subjects. After pronoun subjects alone, the deletion percentage is higher (10%; 46 out of 458 occurrences).

[55]The consonant group includes the subjects *it*, *that*, and *what* plus the dummy subject *there*. I made the decision to consider [r] a consonant after comparing several computer runs with [r] as a vowel and then as a consonant. In each case the chi square was lower when [r] was grouped with the consonants.

[56]The actual number of locatives was quite limited (16). Therefore I did not try to establish a separate category for this environment.

[57]Not counted for CB are two examples of potential *am* deletion, one with *'m am* ("every class I'm am taking") and the other with *I'll* for *I'm* ("how I'll doing here"). Not counted for PM is another example of *I'll* for *I'm* ("I'll trying to help you . . . but you not trying").

[58]In his recent discussion of copula deletion among rural white southerners, Wolfram (1974:503) reports that he found "several illustrations of copula deletion" involving the past tense, but that "such examples . . . actually represent less than 3% of the total cases where the past tense might be deleted." He explains these occasional absences of the past form by stating that "it is sometimes possible to contract past copula forms in allegro style."

[59]The words in parentheses she added after her original draft but before turning the paper in to her instructor. She also made the change from *says* to *say* before handing the paper in.

[60]Examples include "if you have the mind to try and pass the course you be lucky" and "He be cracking up. Then he will get all serious" and "without it he be lost."

[61]In fact I *know* from listening to taped conversations of some of them that "distributive *be*" does occur in their speech.

[62]Deleted third plural *are* is not included in this total. Sentences where the subject was *they* were also not included in the calculations since *they* was categorically used with *are*. "Plural *is*" in this section therefore refers to third plural *is* where the subject is not *they*.

[63]Totals exclude Informant WS, whose low percentage of plural *is* (2.4%) suggests that for her the use of *are* is at least a semi-categorical rather than a variable rule.

[64]They note also, however, that the Oscar Brothers and the lames "are heavily influenced by the SE pattern," showing a "higher concentration" of *were* than the younger teenage peer groups. (1968:249) These informants, as I have noted previously, (see footnote 41) are more similar to the Dayton informants than the other younger teenage peer groups in Harlem.

[65]This total excludes one potential third plural form which was deleted. (See the discussion of deleted past copula, pp. 127-129.)

[66]A preliminary sub-division of Group II into only two categories (personal pronoun vs. noun) yielded no significant difference between the two kinds of subject. I then sub-divided plural noun subjects into L (*people*) and O (all others) in order to compare the significance of *people* as the subject of *was* with its significance as a subject of *is*.

[67]The category P includes *we*, *you*, *they*, and also compound subjects ending in a singular pronoun (e.g. "my friends and I'). There were actually very few of the latter, and for only one of these was the verb *was*.

[68]Group III is concerned with the type of noun phrase closest to the verb; specifically it indicates whether that noun or pronoun is marked plural or not.

[69]In the data on *is* I tested for the possible significance of both of these factors, but it was nonexistent.

[70]It is also probably significant (although the data is rather limited) that the only individuals who used *was* with the first and second person pronoun subjects were the three females with the highest percentage of plural *was*. Thus the use of *was* with *we* or *you* implies its use with third plural subjects but not vice versa.

[71]In computing this total number of occurrences of irregular verb past participles I have of course eliminated all verbs which have past tense forms and past participles that are not distinct (e.g. *lost*), including all verbs which have two or more competing past participle forms in dialects other than BEV; for example, *got/gotten*; *waked/woke/woken*. The total also does not include 8 forms which were functioning as adjectivals (e.g. "he was *gone*," and "he came home *drunk*"), nor examples of *been* as a past participle. The past form was never used for the past participle in either of these contexts.

[72]This total excludes three instances of *run* as a past tense verb (e.g. "one day he run away from home") since it is impossible to tell whether *run* is the present tense form or the past participle being used as the past tense. The total also excludes the possible use of *been* as a past tense verb and it excludes 7 other examples of present tense forms being used for the past tense (e.g. "As I *grow* older I began to face the world"). This phenomenon--the use of the present or unmarked form of the verb for the past tense--was in fact more common (though in fact also infrequent) than the use of the past participle for the past.

[73]The actual number of deleted forms was 5. I have included the Ø forms in my analysis under *a*, assuming that *a* deletion is a process that follows reduction of *an* to *a*. See the following discussion of "Deleted *a*" (pp. 154-155) for further comments on these deletions.

[74]I actually ran the program only on the data of the 25 informants who showed some variability; that is, those who never used *a* before vowels were not included

in this analysis since it is assumed that for them an is categorical before vowels. Also the total number of tokens in the computer program comes to 183 instead of 186 (which is the number of potential occurrences written by the 25 informants) because I was forced to exclude 3 instances of "a adult," not knowing whether the first vowel in adult was stressed [æ dəlt] or unstressed [ədʌlt].

[75]R. Terrebonne included as one of his factor groups the preceding phonological environment (that is, whether a nasal consonant was present before the article or not). It was obvious, however, from his results and from a preliminary look at my own data, that the presence or absence of a nasal before the article was not a factor in determining its shape. Therefore, I eliminated this factor group when I ran the program. R. Terrebonne also did not initially sub-divide his stressed vowels. This division looked significant, however, in my data (and proves to be so according to the computer program); therefore I ran the program with stressed vowels divided into front and non-front (usually low back) vowels.

[76]For the actual percentage differences between these 3 syntactic factors, see the discussion of hypercorrect an, p. 185.

[77]It occurs of course in other dialects as well. The suggestion I am making is that the process is more common in BEV.

[78]Actually of course schwa deletion in writing is necessarily much less common than in speech for reasons I have discussed elsewhere (see footnote 4 of this chapter); that is, literate people rarely spell common words in ways that they have not seen before in print. They may say, for example, [zækli] but never write *zackly or *xactly without the initial "e" because they recognize that such spellings are not legitimate.

[79]There were no examples of multiple negation in my data; therefore this discussion refers to double negatives only.

[80]I also did not count one hypercorrect sentence, where the negative was removed altogether ("there's probably any hope").

[81]One sentence was written with the negative element completely removed from the Indefinite ("Either of my parents attended college").

[82]Labov refers to these types of sentences as characteristic of "Standard Literary English." An example he gives is "Nor is anything happening." (1972a:60-61)

[83]Wolfram's study gives evidence of this also. He states that "multiple negatives involving negative adverbs . . . show relatively less social stigmatization than the other types of negative constructions." (1969: 164)

[84]This rarity could of course reflect a regional variety of BEV, or it might reflect heavy pedagogical influence on the elementary and secondary school level.

[85]The only occasion when an objective pronoun occurred as a singular subject involved the use of hypercorrect whom for who: e.g. "in the presence of friends whom are more intelligent."

[86]They acknowledge that inverted word order in embedded questions is not limited to BEV speakers; they state "expressions such as 'I asked him could he go' are common colloquial forms in the South." (1968:300)

[87]They note that "know is used freely with if but is not common with the NNE construction." (1968:298) But see my discussion of this verb on pp. 171-172.

[88]The verbs preceding those embedded clauses with verbs omitted are the same or similar to those already cited; they include wonder, see, know, and understand; e.g. "wonder what he doing," "see what it like," "don't know what she going threw [sic]," and "understand who the boss." The latter clause (but not the others with omitted verbs) I have included later in the count as an example of inverted word order because it is parallel to the clause Labov et al cite: "how old my sister." They say of this structure "it seems more likely that the underlying form is how old is my sister. Otherwise this would be a unique case of deletion of final, necessarily stressed is, and as far as we can see, this is a categorical impossibility for NNE and SE speakers." (1968:300)

[89]It is possible that a separate supposition involved is "lack of concern," exemplified primarily in sentences with don't care as the main verb; e.g. "do not care what you think." However, my data supplies no examples of these types of sentences where word order is inverted.

[90]This total also excludes the four clauses with deleted verbs. See footnote 88.

[91]Labov et al suggest that "some embedded yes-no questions are categorically inverted." (1968:299) The examples which they cite in this connection all involve the use of ask.

[92]It may also be true that the inverted Wh-questions are not as heavily stigmatized as the yes-no questions. Wh-questions were used by a number of informants in this study who were not generally involved in the writing of other BEV forms. Furthermore, Wh-questions with inverted word order are not uncommon in the speech and writing of middle class white informants in the Northern United States. Labov himself uses the pattern in his writing; e.g. "we cannot state at the moment what was the total population of utterances" (1968:293) and "we have to see what are the underlying rules." (1972a:41)

[93]This may of course be a simple reflection of how common the be forms are in writing.

[94]Wolfram and Fasold observed this and included as one of their footnotes to the article entitled "Toward Reading Materials for Speakers of Black English" the following: "An embedded imperative may be retained in its original quoted form instead of being realized in an infinitive construction (e.g. 'I told you don't do that no more' instead of 'I told you not to do that no more')." (1969:153)

[95]It is possible to view some of these embedded structures as examples of deleted infinitive marker to; however, this explanation will not work for those embedded clauses in which the verb is negated.

[96]The inverted word order appears to be more common in negative embedded commands than in non-negated embedded commands, but this may be because they are more recognizable or because their potential occurrence is greater.

[97]This number excludes 34 deleted a's, but even including these deleted forms, the percentage of an before consonants is the same.

[98]I have limited my analysis of the use of the so-called hypercorrect verbal s to instances in the third plural because of its extremely rare use with other persons. That the third plural is the most likely environment for the third singular s to be extended to is supported by Wolfram's findings. He noted that among Detroit blacks "over half of the cases (39 out of 71

occurrences of -Z with non third person singular forms) occur with third person plural." (1969:138)

[99]"Other" here excludes clauses whose subject is they since they occurred with a verb ending in s only once out of 119 occurrences: "they both deals . . . "

[100]"Any other" of course does not include be.

[101]This total of 280 does not reflect third plural verbs with they as subject. Informant WS has also been excluded from the variable rule analysis program because her 1.8% +s does not suggest that the rule is variable for her, but semi-categorical.

[102]I also tested to see whether the fact that either have or do functioning as auxiliary verbs as opposed to main verbs had any effect on the use of has vs. have or does vs. do, but this did not prove to be the case. Neither did the fact that either form was negated or not have any effect on its form.

[103]Actually, of course, there are environments in which one or two of these relatives can function but not another. For example, that or Ø is appropriate in the sentence "All (that) they want is money," but which is unusual in this kind of structure. Similarly there are restrictions on that; for example, it cannot be used following a preposition and is rarely used to introduce nonrestrictive clauses.

[104]Whose occurred three times and whom occurred four--three times as an object pronoun and once as a subject pronoun. (See footnote 85.) Who was used as an objective pronoun four times. The one sentence with who used as a pronoun referring to a non-person was "there are country who like to take over small country," where probably the writer is thinking of the people who run the country rather than the country itself. It is quite clear that who is in regular use by almost all the informants to refer to persons, although a few used it less frequently than that and/or Ø.

[105]This percentage compares fairly well with data reported in Bryant (1962:174). She states that "relative clauses containing the expressed overt relative pronoun occur almost four times as frequently" as those where the relative is absent. Deleted subject relatives (e.g. "there were incidents took place"), which have sometimes been discussed as a feature of BEV (see Labov 1972a:188-189), were rare in my data--only seven examples--constituting only 0.9% of the potential deleted subject that's.

[106]Wolfram and Fasold briefly discuss various uses of *which* in *The Study of Social Dialects in American English* and even give examples of its "conjunctive" use--"He gave me this cigar which he knows I don't smoke cigars" (1974:168); however, they offer no comparative statistics regarding the frequency of occurrence of *which*, either as a relative or non-relative.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Comparison of the linguistic variables:

The individual discussions of the linguistic variables in Chapter III lead quite naturally to a comparison of the frequency of occurrence of the different BEV features and a discussion of the relative significance of each of these features. Table IV-1 presents these features in descending order of frequency. Column 1 on the left gives the mean percentage of the BEV feature for the entire Dayton group of 42 informants; column 2 gives the actual number of occurrences of the feature over the total potential occurrences for all 42 informants; column 3 gives the number of informants with at least one example of the feature; column 4 gives the mean percentage of the BEV feature for those informants with 5% or more of the feature;[1] column 5 gives the actual number of occurrences of the feature over the total potential occurrences among these same individuals; column 6 gives the number of informants with 5% or more of the BEV feature.

It is obvious from this table that some features had a higher mean percentage of occurrence than others. This factor alone, however, is not sufficient to establish

TABLE IV-1

Ranking of Linguistic Features According to Frequency of Occurrence

	All Informants			Informants With > 5%		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Mean %	# Occur.	# Inf.	Mean %	# Occur.	# Inf.
Possessive 's absence:	22.3%	49/220	17	39.8%	49/123	17
3rd sg. s absence:	19.7%	222/1128	29	32.5%	216/665	24
a before vowels:	18.9%	53/281	25	28.5%	53/186	25
Plural was:	15.7%	49/312	14	31.8%	49/154	14
Adverbial s absence:	15.6%	26/167	10	48.1%	26/54	10
Inverted word order in embedded questions:	15.2%	28/184	16	24.6%	28/114	16
d absence:	14.5%	337/2318	37	23.1%	321/1392	29
Double negatives:	14.0%	25/178	12	30.9%	25/81	12
Regular noun plural s absence:	10.9%	403/3683	28	27.8%	385/1385	16
Object pronoun in plural subjects:	10.0%	5/50	5	50.0%	5/10	5
3rd pl. s presence:	9.9%	63/634	22	16.1%	61/379	20

TABLE IV-1 (cont'd)

Ranking of Linguistic Features According to Frequency of Occurrence

	All Informants			Informants With > 5%		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Mean %	# Occur.	# Inf.	Mean %	# Occur.	# Inf.
Irregular past forms as past participles:	8.9%	18/202	10	24.7%	18/73	10
Plural *is*:	7.6%	33/434	16	18.7%	32/171	15
Copula absence:	5.5%	80/1465	14	23.4%	74/316	12
Existential *it*:	2.5%	7/281	5	28.6%	6/21	4
Deleted *a*:	1.6%	34/2163	13	6.8%	23/340	6
Irregular noun plural *s* presence:	1.2%	7/564	4	7.8%	6/77	3
an before consonants:	1.1%	23/2129	11	10.4%	14/135	3
Singular *are*:	1.0%	14/1444	10	5.8%	7/121	4
Irregular past participles as past verbs:	0.7%	4/556	3	9.1%	4/44	3
Singular *were*:	0.6%	7/1096	5	5.6%	2/36	1

the relative significance of the different features. Other facts must also be taken into account.

Of great importance (and this is the reason for including columns 4 through 6) is the fact that some features take on much more significance than others when their mean percentage of occurrence is limited to individuals with 5% or more of the BEV feature. Thus adverbial s absence gains in significance in view of its very high percentage of occurrence among the ten individuals who used the form without s as opposed to its percentage for the entire group of 42 informants.

Another factor which must be considered is the total number of potential occurrences of the variable. Thus the fact that total potential d occurrences were over 2000 as compared with less than 200 potential adverbial s occurrences affects the significance of both items, giving d absence more weight. Similarly, the fact that 10 people out of the 42 were involved in writing the adverbial forms without s compared with 37 who sometimes wrote the regular past tense and past participle forms without d affects the relative significance of both items. Furthermore, the fact that the adverbial s suffix affects so few words whereas the d suffix affects hundreds of verbs again underlines the greater importance of d absence over adverbial s absence.[2]

Another factor which obviously affects the degree of

significance which a particular feature has is the amount of stigma attached to it. Wolfram (1970:117) has stated that at least six items that I have studied here are characterized by "sharp" rather than "gradient" stratification.[3] These features include third singular _s_ absence, possessive _'s_ absence, copula absence, multiple negation, existential _it_, and the reduction of final bimorphemic consonant clusters (i.e. /-t,d/ deletion).

Although I have no objective criteria for measuring the degrees of stigma of other BEV features,[4] I can make an estimation of what features are heavily stigmatized as opposed to those that are tolerated more widely. It is probably safe to claim, for example, that features of BEV which are shared by large numbers of educated Southern whites carry less stigma than those which are particularly restricted among educated speakers of other dialects.[5] In this category I would include inverted word order in embedded questions, for some examples of this type of construction appear even in the writing of highly educated individuals. (See Chapter III, footnote 92.) The use of _a_ for _an_ before vowels is also of questionable significance, although if the prejudice against its use, which existed in the 30's, still exists today, it is among the top ranking features despite its common use in speech.[6] Some uses of plural _is_ and plural _was_ (e.g. after compound singular subjects or after expletive

there) are also widespread and not necessarily heavily stigmatized. And even some instances of copula deletion (especially are deletion after pronoun subjects[7]) occur commonly in the speech of many Americans.

On the other hand, there is no denying the fact that most examples of lack of subject-verb agreement are heavily stigmatized. Consider, for example, J. Mitchell Morse's recent outburst in College English: "A person who has difficulty with the agreement of subject and verb can't think clearly." (1973:840) It is also undoubtedly true that the absence of the other s suffixes, the deletion of final d (especially when it represents a separate syllable /id/), and most examples of deletion of copula/auxiliary be are all heavily stigmatized. As for the use of double negatives, objective pronouns as subjects, irregular past tense verb forms as past participles: these features, which characterize the nonstandard speech of many whites as well as blacks, have also long invited heavy criticism.

Another important point of course is that often items which are considered "acceptable" or which go by unnoticed in speech are not tolerated in writing. McDavid makes this point (1973:266-267). After giving a lengthy list of so-called "nonstandard" locutions which "may be heard from Southerners whose social credentials are impeccable," he states, "These forms would never appear

in writing, except by way of joking." If this is true, then all the features which I have studied here are heavily stigmatized in writing.

Comparison of the informants by percentages:

Another important matter to take up at this point is the ranking of the informants themselves; that is, how their total percentages of BEV features compare with one another. In Table IV-2, I list all the informants in an order determined by adding each person's percentages of each feature and then dividing by the total number of variables of which the informant had at least one potential occurrence. (See my explanation of this procedure in Chapter II, pp. 48-50.)

At the top of this list is one informant--EJ--whose percentage total stands in sharp contrast to all others. What his BEV total reflects is the fact that he averaged above 50% BEV feature on each of 14 different variables. There is no doubt therefore that this informant was closest to the Vernacular in his writing. Following EJ are 6 others--3 females and 3 males--whose percentage totals are close together. The totals of these 6 also reflect high percentages on a number of key variables. There is a sharp difference, however, between the writing performance of these 6 individuals and those who follow on the list. From informant #8 (PD) continuing downward on

TABLE IV-2

Ranking of Informants by BEV Percentages

Rank	Inf.	Percentage	Rank	Inf.	Percentage
1.	EJ	50.98	22.	WM	6.69
2.	CB	37.50	23.	CR	5.45
3.	BD	31.28	24.	PJ	4.99
4.	RR	30.08	25.	HA	4.47
5.	FJ	27.32	26.	PH	4.38
6.	PM	27.25	27.	FI	3.94
7.	ED	26.73	28.	CG	3.63
8.	PD	16.45	29.	RE	3.48
9.	MB	16.13	30.	DL	2.78
10.	HJ	15.46	31.	RW	2.65
11.	ME	15.11	32.	JC	2.08
12.	GD	14.54	33.	MW	1.82
13.	LJ	12.79	34.	RJ	1.73
14.	CH	12.22	35.	AD	1.61
15.	DG	11.03	36.	CS	1.36
16.	CL	9.89	37.	WS	1.27
17.	DJ	9.08	38.	HS	0.95
18.	CM	9.01	39.	JW	0.91
19.	TA	8.43	40.	RO	0.43
20.	BT	8.18	41.	WJ	0.36
21.	MJ	6.85	42.	JR	0.00

the list, there is a gradual decline in percentage totals until we reach JR, whose writing reflected no BEV features at all.

The big question of course is how to account for the difference in totals between those individuals at the top of the scale and those at the bottom, and particularly how to account for the sharp difference between the 7 individuals at the top of the scale and all the others. Previous sociolinguistic studies, such as Labov's, Wolfram's, and Fasold's, have accounted for differences in linguistic performance in terms of various socioeconomic variables. Wolfram, for example, found that among his Detroit Negro informants social class differences were highly significant. "Social status," he wrote, "is the single most important variable correlating with linguistic differences." (1969:214)

Correlation between linguistic and extra-linguistic variables: socioeconomic status, mobility, and racial isolation:

This uniformity of the findings in other sociolinguistic studies prompted my measurement of the possible correlation between the use of BEV features by the Dayton informants and various extra-linguistic factors. My investigation of social class differences between the Dayton informants did not, however, show any strong correlation between either individual BEV features and social

class factors or between the BEV total percentages and the socioeconomic variables. As a verification or a test of possible correlation between BEV totals and the extra-linguistic factors, I ran the data on a multiple linear regression computer program.

This program measures the degree of correlation between one dependent variable (in this case the BEV total percentages) and a set of independent variables (in this case, socioeconomic status, mobility, and racial isolation) on the assumption that the relationship between them is linear.[8] The program also calculates the F value statistic, which measures whether there is any significant relationship between the variables.

Specifically, what we would expect this multiple regression program to show if there is a relationship between linguistic and extra-linguistic factors is a set of correlations like the following: If there were correlation between the BEV totals and socioeconomic status, the persons with low socioeconomic status would have high BEV totals and conversely those with high status would have low BEV totals. Similarly, we would expect that persons with downward mobility would have high BEV totals and those with upward mobility would have low BEV totals. We would also expect that a high racial isolation index would correlate with a high BEV total, and that those with low racial isolation indexes would

have low BEV totals. However, the program did not in fact show correlation of the BEV totals with any of these three extra-linguistic variables. In each program that I ran, the correlation between dependent and independent variables was below 0.5 and the F value was below the F values in the statistical tables for the appropriate degrees of freedom. This shows that there was no significant linear correlation between the linguistic variable and any of the extra-linguistic variables. In other words, instead of the sharp stratification between individuals of different social classes which Wolfram observed among his Detroit informants, the Dayton informants showed "no clear discontinuity between one class group and another." (Labov 1972b:242)[9]

How do I account then for this lack of correlation between linguistic and extra-linguistic variables and for the fact that my findings are seemingly contradictory to the findings of previous studies?

One reason for this failure of linguistic differentiations to correlate with social class distinctions may be the fact that the Dayton informants are not "evenly distributed" among different social class groups, as for example Wolfram's Detroit informants were (1969:15). In fact, the majority of the Dayton informants represent either upper working class families or lower working class families, and even Wolfram found a "minimal difference"

between these groups in his study (1969:214). This concentration then of informants in one or two social classes--this relative homogeneity of the informants--thus affects any attempt to draw conclusions regarding social class distinctions.[10]

Furthermore, given the overwhelming percentage of Blacks in the West Dayton community (over 90% by 1972), it is not so surprising, either, that racial isolation indexes show so little correlation with the linguistic data. All of the informants had spent their formative years in the Black community; all had presumably attended segregated elementary schools, and the great majority of them (29 of the 42) had also spent all of their high school years in all-black high schools. It is reasonably accurate to say, then, that at least these 29 had been most completely immersed in the Black community before entering college. There was really little difference among them regarding racial isolation.[11]

Another possible explanation for the failure of the Dayton linguistic data to correlate with extra-linguistic factors may be the methodology I employed in assigning SES and mobility ratings to the informants. Their SES indexes reflect only one factor--the occupation of the head of household; and while this factor is a legitimate, attested means of assigning status,[12] it is probably not as accurate a means for measuring social class as a multiple-factor

index, such as "The Index of Status Characteristics" designed by W. Lloyd Warner and his associates. The facts are, however, that certain kinds of information that Warner includes in his Index, particularly the type and condition of the dwelling in which the informants live and lived, (Warner et al 1960:220) were not available to me. I did, however, make an attempt to compensate for this lack of specific information by including census data factors (median income levels and median educational levels of residential tracts) as part of the mobility index which I assigned to my informants. Thus, to DJ, for example, I assigned a high mobility index because of the higher-income/higher-educational level neighborhood into which she and her parents moved. I am aware, however, that census data is not highly reliable and sometimes obscures differences within tracts, so that it is quite possible that my attempts to reflect these environmental factors in the mobility index rating were not entirely successful.

Another likely deficiency, not only in the method I have used to assign SES but in the methods other sociologists have used in the past, is the fact that the kinds of measures traditionally used to determine SES are almost exclusively based on white society norms and the traditional white family structure. There has been an almost complete disregard for the particular problems of assigning

status to families where both partners work or to families where the female is the chief breadwinner. Thus I (and others) have reflected in the SES indexes of many informants only the occupation of the male head of household. The occupations of the women in these households have been almost completely disregarded whenever the men also lived at home. Again, however, this discrepancy in the SES rating I have partially compensated for by attempting to reflect the increased earning power of the family in the mobility index.

Of course a very likely explanation for the lack of correspondence between my findings and the findings of previous sociolinguistic studies may lie in the nature of the data itself. It is, after all, these informants' writing, not their speaking, I have analyzed and attempted to correlate with extra-linguistic factors, and certainly for some of the more inhibited and self-conscious among them, these writing samples may have been far removed from their speech.[13] Unfortunately I had no means of measuring degrees of self-consciousness or affectation. Also unfortunately, few studies have been made of the relationship between speech and writing, and we have therefore limited knowledge of how different they may be from one another.

The informants themselves may be atypical. Certainly in the sense that they were college students in a

predominantly white institution, they were not characteristic of the Black community. It is a mistake, however, to discount their reliability as informants solely on the basis of their being college students. Several of them (e.g. BT, MW, RR) were in fact college students for only a few weeks; others (e.g. PM, BD, ED, FJ) lasted no more than a few months; and still others (notably EJ) have managed to maintain "an extraordinarily tenacious hold on their original dialect" (Labov 1972a:291) despite their endurance in college.

I have offered these several possible explanations for why the Dayton linguistic data does not correlate with certain extra-linguistic factors, but at the same time I think it is important to emphasize that there is not necessarily anything unique or unusual or atypical about either my data or my informants. My findings--that writing performance does not correlate with socioeconomic class, mobility, or racial isolation--may well be valid; they may be upheld by future research.

I also do not view this lack of correlation negatively. In fact, I see the ability of individuals to rise above class or racial distinctions as a very positive, hopeful sign. My data shows that it is possible, in fact not particularly uncommon, for someone from the lowest social class, the most depressed or "deprived" background to overcome those limitations, to "endure," and even to "prevail."

Correlation between school type and BEV percentages:

An important related factor which I have not yet discussed is the influence of integrated vs. segregated schooling. It is a fact that among the 7 individuals with the highest percentages of BEV features (Table IV-2) all but 1 (ED) had attended segregated high schools and even that one had spent only a short time in an integrated school (one and a half years) before returning to graduate from an all-black school. In contrast, of the 13 who had attended integrated high schools (including ED), 7 have a BEV total which averages below 4%. It is notable in fact that the mean BEV percentage of all 13 is 6.37, compared with a mean of 10.75 for all 42 individuals and 12.70 for all 29 who attended only segregated high schools. There is no denying, therefore, that attendance at an integrated school shows correlation with the suppression or reduction of BEV features in writing. This correlation is expected of course. Those students who had had to compete with whites before entering college had learned to adjust more completely to the white norm than those who had not.

Relationship between ACT scores and other factors:

It is also interesting and important to note the relationship between ACT scores and attendance at an

integrated school. In Table IV-3, I list the 13 informants who had attended integrated high schools and give the number of years each one spent in an integrated school as well as their ACT scores and their respective BEV ranks. The mean ACT score of the individuals who attended integrated high schools is 12.2, in comparison with 8.8, which is the mean for those attending only all-black schools. That is, there was a heavier concentration of higher ACT scores among individuals who had gone to integrated schools.[14] These facts are particularly noteworthy in view of two other findings:

1) ACT scores showed no significant correlation with the BEV totals themselves. This was proved by running a multiple linear regression computer program which included ACT scores as one of the independent variables with which I attempted to correlate the BEV totals as the dependent variable.[15]

2) ACT scores also showed no correlation with the other extra-linguistic factors--SES, mobility, and racial isolation. This also was proved by running the ACT scores (as the dependent variable) with these extra-linguistic variables (as independent variables) on the multiple linear regression program.

What these several findings reflect is that, while it is true that most of the individuals who scored high on the ACT test (and in this sample high means between 10

TABLE IV-3

Relationship Between Years Spent in Integrated School, BEV Rank, and ACT English Scores

Inf.	Years in Integrated School	BEV Rank	ACT Score
ED	1.5	7	8
LJ	2	13	13
CM	2	18	17
BT	2	20	9
AD	2	35	6
WM	3	22	11
CS	3	36	9
WS	3	37	--
DJ	4	17	19
CG	4	28	7
JC	4	32	15
RO	4	40	16
JR	4	42	15

and 19 out of a possible 36) had low BEV totals; the reverse of this is not true: the lower scores do not necessarily reflect high percentages of BEV features in the individual's writing. In fact, individuals with low ACT scores had tremendously varying BEV totals and also quite diversified backgrounds. For example, the lowest scoring individual on the ACT test was RW, a male whose BEV total was very low (2.65%)--that is, he exhibited very few BEV features in his writing--and who is also one of the few individuals in the whole sample to have a combination of both high socioeconomic status and upward mobility. This is exactly contrary to what we would expect. And there are others--like FI, MJ, HA, and AD, four females who also scored very low on the test (Standard scores of 5 and 6)--whose BEV totals reflect a similar lack of BEV features in their writing.

I have made a particular point of this matter because ACT (like SAT) tests are widely used in many universities in this country to place students in remedial English classes and to make judgments about those students' college prospects. The editors of Using ACT on the Campus in fact state that their test results "are pertinent to understanding differential abilities, estimating academic potential . . . and judging the appropriateness of educational and vocational plans." (1970:24) I have sought in including these test scores among the variables

which I have studied here to "neutralize the negative effects" caused by "using and trusting test results" (Students' Right 1974:13) and to offer proof that "standardized tests lead to erroneous inferences as to students' linguistic abilities." (Students' Right 1974:12)

The facts are very clear. The higher ACT scores among the Dayton informants generally reflect attendance at white middle class schools. The lower scores encompass a great diversity of linguistic performance among the Dayton informants.

Correlation between sex and the linguistic data:

Another extra-linguistic factor which I have attempted to correlate with the linguistic data is sex. In Chapter III, I pointed out that sex showed some correlation with a number of individual BEV features. The absence of the possessive 's, the absence of adverbial s, the use of double negatives, and the use of a before vowels all were favored by the informant being a male. On the other hand, at least two features were favored by the informant being a female; these features were the absence of the noun plural s and the use of plural was. It is not true, however, that the use of more than a few BEV features correlated with sex. Furthermore, two of the major variables, for which there is an abundance of data available (third singular s and the regular

verb past and past participle d), show no significant difference between the sexes. The BEV totals for males and females also reflect this lack of difference between the sexes. The mean percentage of BEV features for the females is 10.81, and the mean percentage for males is 10.68.

These findings are not what we would expect, for previous sociolinguistic research has "confirmed innumerable times" that "women use fewer stigmatized forms than men and are more sensitive than men to the prestige pattern." (Labov 1972b:243) Perhaps the reason for this failure of the Dayton data to confirm previous results regarding sex differences lies again in the fact that the great majority of the Dayton informants came from either working class or lower class families. Labov has remarked that "the pattern [of women using fewer stigmatized forms than men] is particularly marked in lower-middle-class women." (1972b:243) There are few informants who could possibly be considered middle class among the Dayton females. It is also true, however, that among those few is informant CB (BEV Rank = 2) with one of the highest percentages of BEV features in her writing. This one informant could have considerable effect on the overall pattern of the Dayton females; she could be skewing the data.

Another factor which may be related to the fact

that the Dayton females do not show lower percentages of BEV features than the males is the age of the informants. At 18-20 they are on the threshold between adolescence and adulthood. This may explain why their linguistic patterns are not like those attributed to "women" in other studies. Also, little linguistic research has been carried on so far concerning adolescent females. For example, we have no data on young Black females comparable to the work done concerning young Black males in Harlem.[16] Therefore, we know little about the speech habits of adolescent females.

Another matter that is supposedly related to differences between the sexes is hypercorrection. Labov states flatly "hypercorrectness is certainly strongest in women." (1972b:141) Thus we would expect that the highest percentages among the hypercorrect features would be attained by females and that more females would hypercorrect than males.

In Table IV-4, I present a ranking of the informants according to their percentages of hypercorrect features.[17] There were 27 informants who evidenced some hypercorrection; 16 of these were females and 11 were males. The mean percentage of hypercorrect features for the females was 3.97 and for the males it was 3.93. The mean percentage for all the Dayton informants (including those with no hypercorrection) was for the 22 females 2.89, and for

TABLE IV-4

Hypercorrection Percentages*

	Inf.	%	Sex		Inf.	%	Sex
1.	CM	10.76	F	22.	CR	1.74	M
2.	CL	8.56	F	23.	DL	1.66	F
3.	EJ	7.60	M	24.	FJ	1.48	M
4.	BT	7.15	F	25.	HJ	1.24	F
5.	LJ	6.12	F	26.	WS	0.66	F
6.	DG	6.03	M	27.	PJ	0.30	F
7.	JW	5.00	M				
8.	PH	4.84	M				
9.	CH	4.72	M				
10.	WM	4.50	M				
11.	CB	4.34	F				
12.	ME	4.20	F				
13.	BD	3.92	F				
14.	GD	3.87	F				
15.	MB	3.64	F				
16.	ED	2.76	M				
17.	RW	2.58	M				
18.	PM	2.38	F				
19.	MJ	2.36	F				
20.	DJ	2.34	F				
21.	CS	2.00	M				

*All informants not listed = 0.0

the 20 males 2.16. The difference between these means is not significant at the .05 level of significance. Thus the Dayton data does not agree with previous findings that females hypercorrect significantly more than males.

It is true, however, that more females showed some hypercorrection than males and that among the top five hypercorrect percentages, four of the individuals are females (though none of them are middle class). A more remarkable fact concerns those informants who evidenced no hypercorrection. The six females in this group (AD, FI, HA, RE, RO, and RJ) all had low BEV totals (less than 5%). But among the nine males in this group are one with a very high BEV total (RR) and two males with intermediate totals (PD and TA) besides six with totals below 5%. These facts suggest that all the females with high percentages of BEV features in their writing reflected some insecurity by their use of hypercorrection,[18] but several of the males who used a high percentage of BEV features showed no insecurity in doing so. In this respect TA's heavy use of double negatives (43%) and RR's very limited use of any of the inflectional markers are most remarkable.

Another factor which I weighed in the consideration of the significance of hypercorrect totals was the possible correlation of hypercorrection with other extralinguistic variables, namely socioeconomic status,

mobility, and racial isolation. I ran the hypercorrect totals as the dependent variable with these three factors as the independent variables on the multiple linear regression program. However, I did not find any significant correlation between the variables. The F values were below the level of significance.

One other factor which should be considered regarding these hypercorrect totals is the fact that for most informants the totals reflect primarily percentages of one feature--the third plural verb s suffix. As I have shown in my discussion of this feature in Chapter III, it patterns more like the other BEV features than the other hypercorrect features. Its overall percentage of occurrence is much higher than the percentages for the other three hypercorrect features and it was used by far more informants than any of the other hypercorrect features. (See Table IV-1.) Most important, however, its use was rule governed: I was able to determine specific constraints which favored its use, just as I was able to determine constraints for the other BEV features. These facts call to mind a remark by Derek Bickerton (Aug.13, 1973) that "one man's hypercorrection is another man's vernacular." Thus, the hypercorrection totals and ranks which I have given (Table IV-4) must be considered cautiously with these other factors in mind.

Implicational analysis:

One additional type of analysis which I attempted in order to gain some additional insight into the relationship between the informants and the linguistic variables was implicational scaling. Following methods employed by DeCamp (1971) and Fasold (1970), I examined my data to see whether the use of one feature might imply the use of another feature, which in turn might imply the use of a third, etc. (See my discussion on p. 10, Chapter I.)

For this implicational analysis I did not use all the features I had studied but only those for which the frequency of occurrence was high or relatively high and for which the data was full or relatively full for all the informants.[19] There were seven features which fit these criteria. I determined first the following order of these features based on the number of informants using the feature vs. the number of informants not using the feature: 1) _d_ absence, 2) _a_ before vowels, 3) third singular verb _s_ absence, 4) third plural verb _s_ presence, 5) noun plural _s_ absence, 6) plural _is_, and 7) copula deletion.[20] See Table IV-5.

In Table IV-6, I then list the informants in an order determined by their use of all these seven features.[21] This table does not of course result in the

perfect scalability of Fasold's "hypothetical" model (1970:562) or DeCamp's Jamaican English scale (1971: 355-357).[22] However, despite the fact that there are a number of cells (32 in fact) which deviate from the expected order of an implicational scale (an order which would be represented in the table by +'s always being to the left of any 0's), there is a significant degree of scalability. Out of 294 cells, 262 (or 89%) are in the expected order. Furthermore, 18 of the 42 informants (42.9%) fit the expected pattern exactly, and 17 other informants deviate from the pattern in only one cell.

TABLE IV-5

Ordering of Seven Key BEV Features on the Basis of the Number of Informants Using the Feature vs. the Number Not Using the Feature

		# Inf. Using	# Inf. Not Using	# Inf. Whose Data Insufficient
1.	d absence	35	7	0
2.	a before vowels	25	9	8
3.	3rd sg. s absence	25	15	2
4.	3rd pl. s presence	22	12	8
5.	Noun pl. s absence	22	20	0
6.	Plural is	16	19	7
7.	Copula deletion	12	30	0

TABLE IV-6

Implicational Relationship Between Seven Key Features

Inf.	-d	a/an	-s3sg.	+s3pl.	-sNoun pl.	Pl. is	-Copula
EJ	++	++	++	+	+	++	+
BD	++	+	++	+	+	+	+
RR	++	++	++	--	+	--	+
PM	+	+	++	+	+	+	+
ED	+	++	++	+	+	+	++
GD	+	--	+	--	+	+	+
CB	+	++	++	+	+	0	+
FJ	+	+	+	+	+	0	+
ME	+	+	+	+	+	0	(+)
DG	+	+	+	+	+	0	+
PD	+	0	++	0	+	0	+
CR	+	+	(+)	(+)	0	0	+
CH	+	+	+	+	+	+	0
HJ	+	+	+	0	++	+	0
RE	(+)	+	+	0	(+)	+	0
CM	+	0	+	++	+	+	0
PH	+	0	+	+	+	--	0
MB	(+)	0	+	+	0	+	0
LJ	+	+	+	+	+	0	0
DJ	+	+	+	+	+	0	0
CL	(+)	+	+	+	0	0	0
BT	+	--	--	+	0	--	0
WM	+	+	+	+	0	0	0
RW	+	--	+	--	0	--	0
PJ	(+)	+	+	0	0	+	0
AD	+	0	+	0	0	0	0
MJ	+	+	0	+	0	+	0
WS	(+)	+	0	(+)	0	(+)	0
FI	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
RJ	+	+	0	0	0	0	0
JC	(+)	+	0	--	(+)	0	0
HS	0	+	0	--	(+)	0	0
HA	+	--	0	0	0	+	0
TA	+	0	0	0	0	+	0
CS	+	0	0	+	0	0	0
WJ	(+)	--	0	--	(+)	--	0
CG	0	--	--	0	0	+	+
MW	0	+	0	--	0	--	0
JW	0	0	0	+	(+)	0	0
DL	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
RO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JR	0	--	0	--	0	--	0

Key to symbols: ++ = 50% or more use of the feature; + = 5 to 50% use of the feature; (+) = 0 to 5% use of the feature; 0 = nonuse of the feature; -- = insufficient data to determine use or nonuse.

Table IV-6, then, can in one sense be viewed as an actual illustration of Labov's "stages in the acquisition of Standard English" (1964). In another sense it can also be viewed as an illustration of how close each informant is to the Vernacular. Furthermore, what this table tells us about the informants and the features which they use has important implications for the education of Black Vernacular speakers. It illustrates, for example, that persons who delete the copula in their writing are very likely also to use all the other Vernacular features to the left of the deleted copula in this table.[23] What this means for those who would teach these Vernacular speakers to write in Standard English is that the task ahead of them--both teachers and would-be learners--is formidable. At best what can be accomplished is probably no more than an imperfect learning of some of the features to the left of copula deletion in the table.[24]

This I discovered myself in my attempts to teach various linguistic features to several of the individuals at the top of Table IV-6. One of these was PM. At the time she first became my student, she had just completed her first quarter of college English. One of the major Vernacular features which appeared frequently in her writing was the absence of the noun plural s suffix. For the eight papers she had written during her first

quarter, her percentage of noun plural s absence was 60.4% (55 out of 91 potential occurrences). Early in the second quarter I talked with her about this feature in particular, and thereafter she concentrated specifically on reducing her percentage of noun plural s absence. For the seven papers which followed, her percentage of noun plural absence was in fact reduced to 21.2% (11 out of 52 potential occurrences). This was a considerable change for her though the feature was still quite evident in her writing. In contrast, her use of the third singular s suffix did not change radically. In the first quarter the absence of third singular s was semi-categorical for her (1 occurrence of the s out of a potential 24). In the second quarter she managed to produce only two forms with the s, and also in her last paper (which was an evaluation of the course she was completing) she wrote the remarkable sentence "When the subject is singular, the verb have an 's' on it." This demonstrates her passive knowledge of a grammatical rule which she did not in fact actively use.

The situation was similar for BD. In her first quarter in college English her percentage of third singular s absence was 93.3% (14 out of 15 potential occurrences). Her percentage for the second quarter, after much work, was still very high--80% (20 out of 25 potential occurrences).[25]

It is easy but unfortunate for me to say now in retrospect that trying to teach PM and BD to use the third singular s suffix was a mistake and a waste of time for them and for me. More seriously, the "psychic damage" done to them and to others by me and by other well-intentioned teachers is immeasurable.[26] This is not to say that Standard English cannot be taught at all to Black Vernacular speakers. However, I have serious doubts of any real possibility of teaching speakers like BD, PM, EJ, ED, and RR, whose writing is virtually loaded with BEV features and who are past what Labov calls their "linguistic puberty" (1972b:325) to write in Standard English.[27]

Motivation: integrative vs. instrumental:

There is of course a force which if it exists within an individual, particularly at an earlier age, can override great obstacles--motivation. And there is no doubt that the 42 individuals I have studied here varied tremendously in their motivation to acquire Standard English or to assimilate to the middle class norm. It is important, however, to distinguish here between what Spolsky (1972) has termed "integrative" and "instrumental" motivation--between learning in order to become identified as part of a culture and learning in order to get a better job, a bigger house, a bigger car, etc.

Among the Dayton informants, WJ, JW, and WS are examples of persons with "integrative" motivation--a

motivation to disassociate themselves from their black peers and to identify with the predominantly white middle class.

WJ typifies these individuals. In telling of his experiences in high school, he describes his close association with a white male counselor--a man he called "a good teacher, counselor, fencing coach, a beautiful person and most of all . . . a good friend." In his description of his relationship with this counselor, WJ wrote, "Before he became a counselor he was an English teacher and whenever you were around him you had to use standard English or else he wouldn't talk to you. That is how I learned to talk." Although the latter sentence is very likely an exaggeration, there is no reason to doubt that WJ's speech and his writing were heavily influenced by this man, who was his "good friend." An equally revealing statement by the same informant explains his alienation from his black peers. He wrote, "the people that I went to school with; there were many of them that I did not particularly care for."

WJ's experience was certainly common to others, for example JW, who very frankly stated, "I didn't like my peers; they didn't like me," and WS, who in the middle of the ninth grade refused any longer to attend an all-black school and went on her own initiative and with no support from her family to seek out a white

girls' school to attend instead.

On the other side of the coin we see in informants like EJ and ED and CB "instrumental" motivation--a desire for the material benefits of the middle class and at the same time a rejection of the middle class cultural values themselves. ED, for example, wrote "I want the same opportunities as the whites" and in another breath rejected the "man's" way of attaining those opportunities. Of college he said, "they tell you what they want you to take . . . Just think, I have to pay two to four hundreds [dollars] for courses that I not interest[ed] in . . . why should I take something that I don't need?" CB also complained about "the system" and at the same time explained her motivation for continuing in college: "I am not going to give up not now, because this school have to much of my money, and I plan on getting my money out of this damn school." EJ's motivation is classic. He said, "If I do well in school I'll be able to get a good job and a big white Cadillac, and a big ole house in the country."

This desire to get a good job, which probably is a primary motivation for many students attending college, is permeated for black students by their realization of the inequities that exist between job opportunities for blacks and opportunities for whites. Some feel these inequities more intensely than others. ED, for example,

questioned "How many of the blacks are on welfare, doing janitorial work or working these black lung factory jobs?" and EJ described the plight of the Black man reaching for success in the business world as a "long, hard struggle because he is Black and alone . . . and powerless."

The desire for material benefits and the accompanying recognition of being deprived of them is then not enough motivation to change an individual's language habits. Furthermore, chances for success in changing language habits--in learning Standard English features and in unlearning Vernacular features (it is highly doubtful that the one activity can go on without the other)[28]--are even more formidable if this lack of "integrative" motivation is coupled with outright hostility towards the white middle class itself.

This alienation is expressed in ED's criticism of "this unequal white goverment" and his description of college as a "racket . . . just out to make money . . . ripping off student." It is most vividly illustrated, however, in EJ's intense distrust of all whites. In a conversation with another black male,[29] EJ was asked "Do you hate white people?" He answered, "Hate 'em? Mmm. Well, I get along with some of 'em. Hate 'em? (Pause) I don't <u>like</u> 'em!" And he continued, "They ain't no different, you know, ain't no different in a

bad hunky an' a nice hunky. They both hunkies. They both think the same." And even when asked to consider a situation where a gray person (i.e. white) was trying to help a black person, EJ countered with "That gray person helpin' you for some kin' a reason. That gray person she make some'em out of it for helpin' you, you know. She gained! She ain't doin' it on her wheels. She gain or some'em, you see. She jus' as bad as a other one that keep from startin' to help you. She gain!"

I submit then that this overriding distrust and alienation--this lack of "integrative" motivation--is the strongest deterrent to an individual's being able to acquire a standard dialect. Individuals like EJ, while earnestly desiring the material benefits of being middle class and believing also that "education is the passport to my future," have no respect for those who are middle class and cannot therefore reject their own native culture (including their language) in order to identify with the middle class. The ability to acquire new language habits then comes not as a result of being at a certain status level or of being upwardly mobile or even of being less racially isolated than others (though certainly these all are contributing factors especially the latter), but primarily of being of a particular inclination--of being motivated to be like

whites and unlike most blacks. Alienation from the peer group is a heavy price to pay for "possible" success, but it is the surest way to bring about change in a person's language habits.

Summary of significant findings:

In this dissertation I have sought to determine which BEV features occur in the writing of young college-age adults, and why these features occur; that is, what constraints, linguistic and non-linguistic, cause that occurrence. I have also sought to understand what characterizes those individuals who use these features and particularly why some individuals are more likely to use the Vernacular forms in their writing than others.

Regarding the informants themselves, I have found a wide divergence in linguistic performance--the writing of some being very close to the Vernacular and of others far removed. I was not able to determine that this wide divergence in any way correlated with socioeconomic class, mobility, or degrees of racial isolation. There was some evidence that sex was a factor in the use of certain BEV features, but the overall mean percentages of BEV features for males and females were very much the same. Similarly, scores on the college entrance ACT test showed no correlation with the use of BEV features; that is, low scores themselves did not correlate with the use of BEV features

or with the socioeconomic variables or sex. I did, however, find that those individuals who had attended integrated schools generally had higher ACT scores than those who had attended segregated schools and also that the percentage of BEV features in the writing of those who had attended integrated schools was lower than the percentage for those attending segregated schools. The most important factor, however, in determining an individual's ability to write in Standard English as opposed to the Black English Vernacular is the kind and degree of motivation each individual has. "Instrumental" motivation (the desire to get a good job, to have a lot of money) is insufficient; it is "integrative" motivation (the desire to assimilate to the Middle Class culturally as well as economically) that is most important in determining an individual's acquisition of a prestige dialect.

Regarding the linguistic variables--the BEV features themselves which I have studied--some were obviously more significant than others. Those features with the highest percentage of occurrence included (in descending order) possessive 's absence, third singular s absence, a before vowels, adverbial s absence, inverted word order in embedded questions, d absence, and double negatives. Of these, third singular s absence and d absence have more significance than the others because verbs are such frequently occurring items in anyone's speech or writing

and because of their wide use among so many of the informants.

I was able to determine for a number of the major variables linguistic constraints affecting the occurrence of the BEV variants. Regarding some of these features (e.g. d absence) my results paralleled in many ways those of previous studies of spoken varieties of the Vernacular, indicating that the same constraints that are in operation in speech are also affecting written forms of the language. For other variables (particularly the use of s with third plural verbs) my findings do not parallel those of previous studies. In fact, third plural s presence appears not to be a hypercorrect feature but a regular, commonly occurring feature of some Black speakers' Vernacular.

More important perhaps than my discoveries regarding constraints on individual features is the apparent implicational relationship between the features themselves. Among the seven features for which data was the fullest, I found an apparent implicational relationship such that copula deletion implied the use of plural is, which implied noun plural s absence, which implied third plural verb s presence, which implied third singular s absence, which implied the use of a before vowels, which implied d absence. Plotting each individual's use of these features produced a scale which had 89% scalability:

18 of the 42 informants fitting the pattern exactly and 17 more informants deviating in only one cell. The implications of these findings are that a person who deletes the copula in writing is very likely to use all the BEV features I have studied. Therefore, the task of teaching such an individual to write in Standard English is formidable if not impossible at the age of 17-20, when linguistic puberty has passed.

Implications for further research:

The work underlying this dissertation points to a number of possibilities for further research. One kind of study which should be undertaken is a survey of people's attitudes towards specific linguistic features, a study similar perhaps to Roger Shuy's study of "Language and Success: Who Are the Judges?" (1973), but utilizing written texts as well as spoken ones. The purpose of this kind of research would be to elicit judgments of the relative acceptability of various linguistic features among prospective employers and to ascertain in that way the degrees of stigma attached to those features.

Another kind of study which could be undertaken is related to the controversy still raging between those (like Raven McDavid) who believe that the speech of Black Americans is not significantly different from the speech

of many Southern white Americans and those (like William Stewart) who accept that the Black English Vernacular is significantly different from all other varieties of English. Wolfram's recent comparative study of the speech of rural Mississippi whites and blacks (1974) is certainly an important step forward in resolving this question. But it is also important for pedagogical reasons to have comparative studies of written samples from both blacks and whites. No substantial or reliable research of this nature has yet appeared.[30]

Another important kind of research which needs to be done is a comparison of the speaking and writing habits of the same individual. There is a need to answer the questions "How different is speech from writing?" and "In what ways are they different?" These particular questions I intend to work on myself. I am fortunate to have at my disposal lengthy tape recordings of 11 of the 42 informants whose writing I have studied and reported on here. It is my hope that a comparison of the spoken and written styles of these individuals will lead to a fuller understanding of the problems as well as the stages involved for speakers of the Black Vernacular in the process of acquiring Standard English.

NOTES

CHAPTER IV

[1]My selection of 5% as the lowest percentage at which a variable is significant is of course arbitrary. It is based upon Labov's distinction between variable and semi-categorical rules (1970b:28-29) and is therefore an attempt to eliminate from the count any persons whose use of the feature may be due to chance.

[2]For other examples of features affected by this factor, see Wolfram's discussion of the "generality of rules." (1970:110)

[3]Wolfram defines "gradient stratification" as "a progressive increase in the frequency of occurrence of a variant between social groups without a clearly defined difference between contiguous social groups," and "sharp," he says, "indicates a sharp demarcation between contiguous social classes." (1970:107)

[4]I could of course refer to studies such as Sterling Leonard's "Current English Usage" (1932) or Margaret Bryant's Current American Usage (1962), but the Leonard study in particular is dated and Bryant's work is certainly no longer "current" either. Furthermore, these and other succeeding studies of the status and acceptability of various grammatical structures (for example, Pooley 1974) have never been geared specifically to incorporate Black Vernacular features (though of course some characteristics of BEV were included in them because they are shared with other dialects; e.g. a before vowels). Therefore, degrees of stigma attached to various BEV features have yet to be determined.

[5]See Wolfram's use of "regional versus general social significance." (1970:113-115)

[6]In Leonard's 1932 study "a before vowels" was one of the very few items to receive a unanimous rating of "illiterate" from all 218 judges. (Marckwardt and Walcott 1938:98)

[7]McDavid gives examples of this phenomenon among educated Southern speakers. (1973:266) Wolfram, too,

states that "there are certain types of constructions in which the absence of a copula is much less socially significant than others." (1970:110)

[8]It is important to emphasize, as Freund (1973:426) does, that the program "measures only the strength of linear relationships . . . it does not necessarily imply a cause-effect relationship."

[9]This lack of correlation does not conflict, however, with Marilyn Sternglass's findings regarding the writing of Black and White college students in the Pittsburgh area, for she found "no statistically significant correlation between socioeconomic class and the production of nonstandard forms." (1974:279) I reject, however, Sternglass's suggested explanation for this lack of correlation. She states that the individuals she studied "were characterized by some form of language deficiency." (279) The "pre-selection process" which she mentions as determining this "deficiency" was for many of her informants a standardized test on which the students scored low. As I explain on pp. 230-234, standardized tests are not a reliable means of testing "language deficiency."

[10]I do not, however, apologize for this concentration of the informants in the working classes, because that concentration itself is a reflection of the reality of the Black community. There are not in fact many informants of higher social status in the West Dayton area.

[11]In this respect my findings are not particularly at variance with Wolfram's, who found that "the factor of racial isolation" had "some effect on the speech of pre-adolescents and teenagers," but "very little effect on adults." (1969:216)

[12]Alan Jensen (1971:72) reports that both "Richard Centers and C. Wright Mills have relied upon the occupational factor as their measure of social class."

[13]This is particularly true when they were asked (as unfortunately a few of them were) to write on subjects such as "A College Student Passes Through Several Stages Before Coming [sic] Fully Mature" or "Summer is the Best Season Because it Means Freedom from Restraint."

[14]In fact 58.3% (7 out of 12) of the informants who took the ACT test and attended integrated schools had a

score of 10 or above, but only 34.6% (9 out of 26) of the informants who took the test and attended segregated schools had a score of 10 or above.

[15]I repeat that "independent" and "dependent" do not "imply a cause-effect relationship." Even if the ACT scores had shown correlation with the BEV totals, it could simply mean that both factors were results of still another factor, not stipulated, not that they were causally related.

[16]There is of course Claudia Mitchell-Kernan's important study, but her primary informants were not adolescent or teen-age females but young adults.

[17]I determined these rankings by adding together percentages of irregular noun plurals ending in _s_, _an_ before consonants, singular _are_, singular _were_, and third plural verbs ending in _s_, and then dividing by five. Actually for a few informants (5) I divided by less than five because they had no potential occurrences of one or more of the hypercorrect variables.

[18]The female with the highest hypercorrection total (CM) expressed this insecurity on one occasion when I was tape recording her. At the end of the recording, there was the following exchange between us:

CM: "What is this for?"
NT: "It's a dialect project."
CM: "Dia--Oh my Lord, my dialect!"
NT: "People are so self-conscious about it that if I tell you that ahead of time--"
CM: "Boy, I would have probably talked all proper and hardly said anything."

[19]By full I mean that there were few if any informants with absence of the feature due to a complete lack of data or even to potential occurrences less than 5. For example, I did not attempt to use the absence of possessive _'s_ in this implicational analysis because for 19 informants the data was insufficient on possessive _'s_.

[20]I also attempted to determine the placement of the other major linguistic features (those for which the data was not as full) along this continuum. Though my decisions are tentative, these features appear to fit in the following order: inverted word order in embedded questions apparently belongs adjacent to _a_ before vowels

but to the right of d absence; the absence of the possessive 's falls between noun plural s absence and plural is, and so apparently does the use of irregular past tense verb forms as past participles and double negatives. Plural was is immediately adjacent to plural is, and the absence of adverbial s has a distribution similar to the deleted copula; that is, its absence is restricted to a few individuals whose writing was also characterized by all or almost all the features studied.

[21]Whenever two or more individuals appeared to be at the same level in the continuum, I ranked them according to the previous order given in Table IV-2.

[22]Bickerton (1973:642) has criticized the "unsystematic selection of items from different linguistic levels" which was used by DeCamp and which I have used also here. Undoubtedly he is right that implicational scales are best suited to items which are very closely related linguistically. If I had failed to attempt an implicational scale analysis, however, I would have missed some important insights into the relationships between the quite different features which I have studied here.

[23]In fact they very likely use most of the other features which I studied as well. This is true of the first ten informants on Table IV-6, whose writing was characterized by use of all the most common features as given in Table IV-1 with the exception that two who did not use plural is also did not use plural was.

[24]Which ones could most easily be learned would depend not only on how far left of copula deletion the feature is but also on the degree to which the feature is used. Thus plural is and the third plural s ending on verbs might more easily be unlearned than other features because their overall percentage of occurrence is lower than the other major features. (See Table IV-1.)

[25]Four of the five forms with an s occurred on her very last paper of the second quarter.

[26]This term I have ironically borrowed from Marilyn Sternglass, who writes "There appears to be no 'psychic' damage when the contrasting patterns are identified from the actual writing produced by the student, particularly when the student himself produced both the standard and nonstandard form in the same piece of writing." (1974:283) I question how Sternglass can know this, how she has measured this lack of "psychic damage."

[27]Learning to <u>speak</u> Standard English at this point is of course an even more unlikely possibility.

[28]I am not completely denying the possibility of bidialectalism, particularly for individuals who begin acquiring a second dialect at an earlier age, but I am extremely dubious that it is a realistic goal for individuals to begin work on as young adults.

[29]These remarks occurred in a taped conversation between EJ and Andrew Taylor, a young black from Columbus, Ohio, who was employed by R. Terrebonne and myself to collect interviews with some of his fellow dorm residents. The project was sponsored in part by an NSF grant.

[30]M. Sternglass's recent work has led her to the conclusion that the writing of college-age blacks and whites is not significantly different and therefore "separate language materials for white and black students are not needed." (1974:282) Unfortunately, her evidence for these conclusions is both unreliable and spurious, being as it was, based on one out-of-class writing sample per informant.

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APPENDIX

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS USED IN TABLES

Constr.	=	Construction
Inf.	=	Informant(s)
Mob.	=	Mobility
Occup.	=	Occupational
Occur.	=	Occurrence(s)
Pl.	=	Plural
Pot.	=	Potential
P. P.	=	Past Participle
Rac.Is.	=	Racial Isolation
Rehab.	=	Rehabilitation
Reltv.	=	Relative
SES	=	Socioeconomic Status
Sg.	=	Singular
Tot.	=	Total
>	=	Greater than
#	=	Number
%	=	Percentage

VITA

I, Nancy Goppert Terrebonne, received my early education in the public schools of Kansas City, Missouri, and graduated in 1953 as salutatorian of my high school class. I have spent much of my life since that time either attending classes or teaching them at one university after another. I received my B. A., with Honors in English, from the University of Kansas in 1959 and an M. A. in linguistics from Louisiana State in 1966. I also spent a most worthwhile summer as a student at the Linguistic Institute at the University of Michigan in 1973. I have probably taught over 1200 students in my years as teaching assistant, instructor, adjunct instructor, and tutor. The pay was never very good, but I really enjoyed my students and I learned much from them.

My Education has not, however, been limited to time spent at a desk or in a classroom. Marriage, secretarial work, pregnancies, death, divorce, and discrimination have all been a part of that Education. I have not yet overcome. But I am still in there fighting--and I am still learning.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Nancy Goppert Terrebonne

Major Field: Linguistics

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Approved:

William W. Evans
Major Professor and Chairman

James B. Graynham
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Nicholas Canedy

Mary Frances Hopkins

Margaret B. Stanley

Date of Examination:

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